

1416
AN
E S S A Y

ON THE
LEARNING OF SHAKSPEARE.

BY
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A NEW EDITION.

B A S I L:

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P R E F A C E

T O

THE SECOND EDITION,

1767.

THE author of the following ESSAY was solicitous only for the honour of *Shakspeare*: he hath however, in *his own* capacity, little reason to complain of *occasional* criticks, or criticks *by profession*. The very FEW, who have been pleased to controvert any part of his doctrine, have favoured him with better manners, than arguments; and claim his thanks for a further opportunity of demonstrating the futility of *theoretick* reasoning against *matter of fact*. It is indeed strange, that any *real* friends of our immortal POET should be still willing to force him into a situation, which is not tenable: treat him as a *learned* man, and what shall excuse the most gross violations of history, chronology, and geography?

Οὐδ' ἀνίσταται, ἐδ' ἂν ἀνίσταται is the motto of every polemic: like his brethren at the *amphitheatre*, he holds it a merit to *die hard*; and will not say, *enough*, though the battle be decided. “Were it shewn, (says some one) that the old bard borrowed *all* his allusions from *English* books then published, our *Essayist* might have possibly established his system.”—

B 2

In good time!——This had scarcely been attempted by *Peter Burman* himself, with the library of *Shakspeare* before him.——“Truly, (as *Mr. Dogberry* says,) for *mine own* part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all on this subject:” but where should I meet with a reader? — When the main pillars are taken away, the whole building falls in course: Nothing hath been, or can be, pointed out, which is not easily removed; or rather which was not *virtually* removed before: a very little *analogy* will do the business. I shall therefore have no occasion to trouble myself any further; and may venture to call my pamphlet, in the words of a pleasant declaimer against *sermons on the thirtieth of January*, “an answer to every thing that shall hereafter be written on the subject.”

But “this method of reasoning will prove any one ignorant of the languages, who hath written when translations were extant.”——*Shade of Burgerfducius!* — does it follow, because *Shakspeare's* early life was incompatible with a course of education—whose contemporaries, friends and foes, nay, and himself likewise, agree in his want of what is usually called *literature* — whose mistakes from equivocal translations, and even typographical errors, cannot possibly be accounted for otherwise, — that *Locke*, to whom not one of these circumstances is applicable, understood no *Greek*? — I suspect, *Rollin's* opinion of our philosopher was not founded on this argument.

Shakspeare wanted not the filts of languages to raise him above all othermen. The quotation from *Lilly* in the *Taming of the Shrew*, if indeed it be his, strongly proves the extent of his reading: had he known *Terence*, he would not have quoted erroneously from his *Grammar*. Every one hath met with men in common life, who, according to the language of the *Water-poet*, "got only from *possum* to *posset*," and yet will throw out a line occasionally from their *Accidence* or their *Cato de Moribus* with tolerable propriety.—If, however, the old editions be trusted in this passage, our author's memory somewhat failed him in point of *concord*.

The rage of *parallelisms* is almost over, and in truth nothing can be more absurd. "THIS was stolen from *one* classick,—THAT from *another*;"—and had I not stepped in to his rescue, poor *Shakspeare* had been stript as naked of ornament, as when he first *held horses* at the door of the playhouse.

The late ingenious and modest Mr. *Dodley* declared himself

"Untutor'd in the lore of *Greece* or *Rome*:"

yet let us take a passage at a venture from any of his performances, and a thousand to one, it is stolen. Suppose it be his celebrated compliment to the *ladies*, in one of his earliest pieces, *The Toy-shop*: "A good wife makes the cares of the world sit easy, and adds a sweetness to its pleasures; she is a man's best companion in prosperity, and his only

friend in adversity; the carefullest preserver of his health, and the kindest attendant in his sickness; a faithful adviser in distress, a comforter in affliction, and a prudent manager in all his domestick affairs." Plainly, from a fragment of *Euripides* preserved by *Stobæus*:

" Γυνὴ γὰρ ἐν κακοῖσι καὶ νόσοις πόσει

" Ἡδιστόν ἐστι, δώματ' ἦν οἰκῇ καλῶς,

" Ὀργὴν τε σπραῦνενσα, καὶ δυσθυμίας

" Ψυχὴν μεδιστᾶς!" — *Par.* 4to. 1623.

Malvolio in the *Twelfth Night* of *Shakspeare* hath some expressions very similar to *Alnaschar* in the *Arabian Tales*: which perhaps may be sufficient for some criticks to prove his acquaintance with *Arabic*!

It seems however, at last, that "*Taste* should determine the matter." This, as *Bardolph* expresses it, is a *word of exceeding good command*: but I am willing, that the standard itself be somewhat better ascertained before it be opposed to demonstrative evidence.——Upon the whole, I may consider myself as the *pioneer* of the *commentators*: I have removed a deal of *learned rubbish*, and pointed out to them *Shakspeare's* track in the ever-pleasing *paths of nature*. This was necessarily a previous inquiry; and I hope I may assume with some confidence, what one of the first criticks of the age was pleased to declare on reading the former edition, that "*The question is now for ever decided.*"

ADVERTISEMENT

PREFIXED TO

THE THIRD EDITION,

1789.

IT may be necessary to apologize for the republication of this pamphlet. The fact is, it has been for a good while extremely scarce, and some mercenary publishers were induced by the extravagant price, which it has occasionally borne, to project a new edition without the consent of the author.

A few corrections might probably be made, and many additional proofs of the argument have necessarily occurred in more than twenty years: some of which may be found in the late admirable editions of our POET, by Mr. *Steevens* and Mr. *Reed*.

But, perhaps enough is already said on so light a subject:—A subject, however, which had for a long time pretty warmly divided the criticks upon *Shakspeare*.

AN
E S S A Y
ON THE
LEARNING OF SHAKSPEARE:

ADDRESSED TO

JOSEPH CRADOCK, Esq.

"SHAKSPEARE," says a brother of the *craft*,^{*} "is a vast garden of criticism!" and certainly no one can be favoured with more weeders *gratis*.

But how often, my dear sir, are weeds and flowers torn up indiscriminately?—the ravaged spot is replanted in a moment, and a profusion of critical thorns thrown over it for security.

"A prudent man, therefore, would not venture his fingers amongst them."

Be however in little pain for your friend, who regards himself sufficiently to be cautious:—yet he asserts with confidence, that no improvement can be expected, whilst the natural soil is mistaken for a hot-bed, and the natives of the banks of *Avon*

^{*} Mr. Seward, in his Preface to *Beaumont and Fletcher*, 10 Vols. 8vo. 1750.

are scientifically choked with the culture of exoticks.

Thus much for metaphor ; it is contrary to the *statute* to fly out so early : but who can tell, whether it may not be demonstrated by some critick or other, that a deviation from rule is peculiarly happy in an Essay on Shakspeare !

You have long known my opinion concerning the literary acquisitions of our immortal dramatist ; and remember how I congratulated myself on my coincidence with the last and best of his editors. I told you however, that his *small Latin and less Greek*³ would still be litigated, and you see very assuredly that I was not mistaken. The trumpet hath been sounded against “ the darling project of representing Shakspeare as one of the illiterate vulgar ;” and indeed to so good purpose, that I would by all means recommend the performer to the army of the *braying faction*, recorded by Cervantes. The testimony of his contemporaries is again disputed ; constant tradition is opposed by flimsy arguments ; and nothing is heard, but confusion and nonsense. One could scarcely imagine this a topick very likely to inflame the passions : it is asserted by Dryden, that “ those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greatest commendation ;” yet an attack upon an article of faith

³ This passage of Ben Jonson, so often quoted, is given us in the admirable preface to the late edition, with a various reading, “ small Latin and *no* Greek,” which hath been held up to the publick for a modern sophistication : yet whether an error or not, it was adopted above a century ago by W. Towers, in a panegyrick on Cartwright. His eulogy, with more than fifty others, on this now forgotten poet, was prefixed to the edit. 1651.

hath been usually received with more temper and complacence, than the unfortunate opinion, which I am about to defend.

But let us previously lament with every lover of Shakspeare, that the question was not fully discussed by Mr. Johnson himself: what he sees intuitively, others must arrive at by a series of proofs; and I have not time to *teach* with precision: be contented therefore with a few cursory observations, as they may happen to arise from the chaos of papers, you have so often laughed at, "a stock sufficient to set up an *editor in form*." I am convinced of the strength of my cause, and superior to any little advantage from sophistical arrangements.

General positions without proofs will probably have no great weight on either side, yet it may not seem fair to suppress them: take them therefore as their authors occur to me, and we will afterward proceed to particulars.

The testimony of Ben. stands foremost; and some have held it sufficient to decide the controversy: in the warmest panegyrick, that ever was written, he apologizes⁴ for what *he* supposed the only defect in his "beloved friend,—

‘ ———— Soul of the age !

‘ Th’ applause ! delight ! the wonder of our stage !—’

whose memory he honoured almost to idolatry:" and conscious of the worth of ancient literature, like any other man on the same occasion, he rather carries his acquirements *above*, than *below* the truth. "Jealousy!" cries Mr. Upton; "people will allow

⁴ " Though thou hadst *small Latin*," &c.

others any qualities, but those upon which they highly value *themselves*." Yes, where there is a competition, and the competitor formidable: but, I think, this critick himself hath scarcely set in opposition the learning of Shakspeare and Jonson. When a superiority is universally granted, it by no means appears a man's literary interest to depress the reputation of his antagonist.

In truth the received opinion of the pride and malignity of Jonson, at least in the earlier part of life, is absolutely groundless: at this time scarce a play or a poem appeared without Ben's encomium, from the original Shakspeare to the translator of Du Bartas.

But Jonson is by no means our only authority. Drayton the countryman and acquaintance of Shakspeare, determines his excellence to the *naturall braine*⁵ only. Digges, a wit of the town before our poet left the stage, is very strong to the purpose,

" — Nature only helpt him, for looke thorow
 " This whole book, thou shalt find he doth not borow,
 " One phrase from Greekes, not Latines imitate,
 " Nor once from vulgar languages translate."⁶

Suckling opposed his *easier strain* to the *sweat of the learned Jonson*. Denham assures us, that all he had was from *old mother-wit*. *His native wood-notes wild*, every one remembers to be celebrated by

⁵ In his *Elegie on Poets and Poesie*, p. 206. Folio, 1627.

⁶ From his *Poem upon Master William Shakspeare*, intended to have been prefixed, with the other of his composition, to the folio of 1623: and afterward printed in several miscellaneous collections: particularly the spurious edition of *Shakspeare's Poems*, 1640. Some account of him may be met with in *Wood's Athenæ*.

Milton. Dryden observes prettily enough, that "he wanted not the spectacles of books to read nature." He came out of her hand, as some one else expresses it, like *Pallas* out of *Jove's* head, at full growth and mature.

The ever memorable Hales of Eton, (who, notwithstanding his epithet, is, I fear, almost forgotten,) had too great a knowledge both of Shakspeare and the ancients to allow much acquaintance between them: and urged very justly on the part of genius in opposition to pedantry, that "if he had not *read* the classics, he had likewise not *stolen* from them; and if any topick was produced from a poet of antiquity he would undertake to show somewhat on the same subject, at least as well written by Shakspeare."

Fuller a diligent and equal searcher after truth and quibbles, declares positively, that "his learning was very little, — *nature* was all the *art* used upon him, as *he himself*, if alive, would confess." And may we not say, he did confess it, when he apologized for his *untutored lines* to his noble patron the Earl of Southampton? — this list of witnesses might be easily enlarged; but I flatter myself, I shall stand in no need of such evidence.

One of the first and most vehement assertors of the learning of Shakspeare, was the editor of his poems, the well-known Mr. Gildon;⁷ and his steps

⁷ Hence perhaps the *ill-flarr'd rage* between this critick and his elder brother, John Dennis, so pathetically lamented in the *Dunciad*. Whilst the former was persuaded, that "the man who doubts of the learning of Shakspeare, hath none of his own:" the latter, above regarding the attack in his *private capacity*, declares with great patriotick vehemence,

were most punctually taken by a subsequent labourer in the same department, Dr. Sewell.

Mr. Pope supposed "little ground for the common opinion of his want of learning:" once indeed he made a proper distinction between *learning* and *languages*, as I would be understood to do in my title-page; but unfortunately he forgot it in the course of his disquisition, and endeavoured to persuade himself that Shakspeare's acquaintance with the ancients might be actually proved by the same medium as Jonson's.

Mr. Theobald is "very unwilling to allow him so poor a scholar, as many have laboured to represent him;" and yet is "cautious of declaring too positively on the other side of the question."

Dr. Warburton hath exposed the weakness of some arguments from *suspected* imitations; and yet offers others, which, I doubt not, he could as easily have refuted.

Mr. Upton wonders "with what kind of reasoning any one could be so far imposed upon, as to imagine that Shakspeare had no learning;" and lashes with much zeal and satisfaction "the pride and pertness of dunces, who, under such a name would gladly shelter their own idleness and ignorance."

He, like the learned knight, at every anomaly in grammar or metre,

that "he who allows Shakspeare had learning, and a familiar acquaintance with the ancients, ought to be looked upon as a detractor from the glory of Great Britain." Dennis was expelled his college for attempting to stab a man in the dark: Pope would have been glad of this anecdote.

“ Hath hard words ready to show why,
“ And tell what *rule* he did it by.”

How would the old bard have been astonished to have found, that he had very skilfully given the *trochaic dimeter brachycatalectic*, COMMONLY called the *ithyphallic* measure to the Witches in *Macbeth*! and that now and then a halting verse afforded a most beautiful instance of the *pes proceleusmaticus*!

“ But, continues Mr. Upton, it was a learned age; Roger Ascham assures us, that Queen Elizabeth read more Greek every day, than some *dignitaries* of the church did Latin in a whole week.” This appears very probable; and a pleasant proof it is of the general learning of the times, and of Shakspeare in particular. I wonder, he did not corroborate it with an extract from her injunctions to her clergy, that “such as were but *mean readers* should peruse over before, once or twice, the chapters and homilies, to the intent they might read to the better understanding of the people.”

Dr. Grey declares, that Shakspeare's knowledge in the Greek and Latin tongues cannot *reasonably* be called in question. Dr. Dodd supposes it proved, that he was not such a novice in learning and antiquity as *some people* would pretend. And to close the whole, for I suspect you to be tired of quotation, Mr. Whalley, the ingenious editor of Jonson, hath written a piece expressly on this side the question: perhaps from a very excusable partiality, he was willing to draw Shakspeare from the field of nature to *classick* ground, where alone; he knew, his author could possibly cope with him.

These criticks, and many others their coadjutors,

have supposed themselves able to trace Shakspeare in the writings of the ancients ; and have sometimes persuaded us of their own learning, whatever became of their author's. Plagiarisms have been discovered in every natural description and every moral sentiment. Indeed by the kind assistance of the various *Excerpta*, *Sententiæ*, and *Flores*, this business may be effected with very little expence of time or sagacity ; as Addison hath demonstrated in his comment on *Chevy-chase*, and Wagstaff on *Tom Thumb* ; and I myself will engage to give you quotations from the elder English writers (for to own the truth, I was once idle enough to collect such,) which shall carry with them at least an equal degree of similarity. But there can be no occasion of wasting any future time in this department : the world is now in possession of the *Marks of Imitation*.

“ Shakspeare however hath frequent allusions to the *facts* and *fables* of antiquity.” Granted : — and as Mat. Prior says, to save the effusion of more Christian ink, I will endeavour to show, how they came to his acquaintance.

It is notorious, that much of his *matter of fact* knowledge is deduced from Plutarch : but in what language he read him, hath yet been the question. Mr. Upton is pretty confident of his skill in the original, and corrects accordingly the *errors of his copyists* by the Greek standard. Take a few instances, which will elucidate this matter sufficiently.

In the third act of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Octavius represents to his courtiers the imperial pomp of those illustrious lovers, and the arrangement of their dominion,

“ ————— Unto her
 “ He gave the 'stablishment of Egypt, made her
 “ Of lower Syria, Cyprus, *Lydia*,
 “ Absolute queen.”

Read *Libya*, says the critick *authoratively*, as is plain from *Plutarch*, Πρώτην μὲν ἀπέφηνε Κλεοπάτραν βασίλισσαν Αἰγύπτου καὶ Κύπρου καὶ ΛΙΒΥΗΣ, καὶ κοίτης Συρίας.

This is very true: Mr. Heath⁸ accedes to the correction, and Mr. Johnson admits it into the text: but turn to the translation, from the French of Amyot, by Thomas North, in folio, 1579,⁹ and you will at once see the origin of the mistake.

“ First of all he did establish Cleopatra queene of Ægypt, of Cyprus, of *Lidya*, and the lower Syria.”

Again, in the fourth act:

“ ————— My messenger
 “ He hath whipt with rods, dares me to personal combat,
 “ Cæsar to Antony. Let th' old ruffian know
 “ I have many other ways to die; mean time
 “ Laugh at his challenge. —”

“ What a reply is this?” cries Mr. Upton, “ ’tis acknowledging he should fall under the unequal combat. But if we read,

⁸ It is extraordinary, that this gentleman should attempt so voluminous a work, as the *Revisal of Shakspeare's Text*, when, he tells us in his Preface, “ he was not so fortunate as to be furnished with either of the *folio* editions, much less any of the ancient *quartos*:” and even Sir Thomas Hanmer's performance was known to him only by Mr. Warburton's representation.”

⁹ I find the character of this work pretty early delineated:
 “ 'Twas Greek at first, that Greek was Latin made,
 “ That Latin, French; that French to English straid:
 “ Thus 'twixt one Plutarch there's more difference,
 “ Than i'th' same Englishman return'd from France.”

- ‘ ——— Let the old ruffian know
 ‘ *He* hath many other ways to die; mean time
 ‘ *I* laugh at his challenge.——’

we have the poignancy and the very repartee of Cæsar in Plutarch.”

This correction was first made by Sir Thomas Hanmer, and Mr. Johnson hath received it. Most indisputably it is the sense of Plutarch, and given so in the modern translation: but Shakspeare was misled by the ambiguity of the old one: “Antony sent again to challenge Cæsar to fight him: Cæsar answered, That *he* had many other ways to die, than so.”

In the third act of *Julius Cæsar*, Antony, in his well-known harangue to the people, repeats a part of the emperor’s will:

- “ —— To every Roman citizen he gives,
 “ To every sev’ral man, seventy-five drachmas. ——
 “ Moreover he hath left you all his walks,
 “ His private arbours, and new-planted orchards,
 “ On *this* side Tiber. ——”

“ Our author certainly wrote,” says Mr. Theobald, — “ On *that* side Tiber —

- ‘ *Trans* Tiberim — prope Cæsaris hortos.’

And Plutarch, whom Shakspeare very diligently studied, expressly declares, that he left the publick his gardens and walks, πέραν τῆς Ποταμῆς, *beyond the Tyber.*”

This emendation likewise hath been adopted by the subsequent editors; but hear again the old translation, where Shakspeare’s *study* lay: “He bequeathed unto every citizen of Rome seventy-five

drachmas a man, and he left his gardens and arbours unto the people, which he had on *this* side of the river of Tyber." I could furnish you with many more instances, but these are as good as a thousand.

Hence had our author his characteristick knowledge of Brutus and Antony, upon which much argumentation for his learning hath been founded: and hence *literatim* the epitaph on Timon, which it was once presumed, he had corrected from the blunders of the Latin version, by his own superior knowledge of the original.^a

I cannot however omit a passage from Mr. Pope. "The *speeches* copied from Plutarch in *Coriolanus* may, I think, be as well made an instance of the learning of Shakspeare, as those copy'd from Cicero in *Catiline*, of Ben Jonson's." Let us inquire into this matter, and transcribe a *speech* for a specimen. Take the famous one of Volumnia:

"Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
 "And state of bodies would bewray what life
 "We've led since thy exile. Think with thyself,
 "How more unfortunate than all living women
 "Are we come hither; since thy sight, which should
 "Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
 "Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow;
 "Making the mother, wife, and child to see
 "The son, the husband, and the father tearing
 "His country's bowels out: and to poor we
 "Thy enmity's most capital; thou barr'st us
 "Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
 "That all but we enjoy. For how can we,
 "Alas! how can we, for our country pray,
 "Whereto we're bound, together with thy victory,
 "Whereto we're bound? Alack! or we must lose

^a See Theobald's Preface to *King Richard II.* 8vo. 1720.

“ The country, our dear nurse ; or else thy person,
 “ Our comfort in the country. We must find
 “ An eminent calamity, though we had
 “ Our wish, which side thou’st win. For either thou
 “ Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
 “ With manacles thorough our streets ; or else
 “ Triumphantly tread on thy country’s ruin,
 “ And bear the palm, for having bravely shed
 “ Thy wife and children’s blood. For myself, son,
 “ I purpose not to wait on fortune, till
 “ These wars determine : if I can’t persuade thee
 “ Rather to show a noble grace to both parts,
 “ Than seek the end of one ; thou shalt no sooner
 “ March to assault thy country, than to tread
 “ (Trust to’t, thou shalt not,) on thy mother’s womb,
 “ That brought thee to this world.”

I will now give you the old translation, which
 shall effectually confute Mr. Pope : for our author
 hath done little more, than thrown the very words
 of North into blank verse :

“ If we helde our peace (my sonne) and deter-
 mined not to speake, the state of our poore bodies,
 and present sight of our rayment, would easely be-
 wray to thee what life we haue led at home, since
 thy exile and abode abroad. But thinke now with
 thy selfe, howe much more unfortunately, then all
 the women liuinge we are come hether, consider-
 ing that the sight which should be most pleasaunt
 to all other to beholde, spitefull fortune hath made
 most fearfull to us : making my selfe to see my
 sonne, and my daughter here, her husband, be-
 sieging the walles of his natie countrie. So as
 that which is the only comfort to all other in their
 aduersitie and miserie, to pray unto the goddes, and
 to call to them for aide ; is the onely thinge which
 plongeth us into most deepe perplexitie. For we

cannot (alas) together pray, both for victorie, for our countrie, and for safety of thy life also : but a worlde of grievous curses, yea more than any mortall enemy can heape upon us, are forcibly wrapt up in our prayers. For the bitter soppe of most harde choyce is offered thy wife and children, to foregoe the one of the two : either to lose the person of thy selfe, or the nurse of their native countrie. For my selfe (my sonne) I am determined not to tarrie, till fortune in my life time doe make an ende of this warre. For if I cannot perswade thee, rather to doe good unto both parties, then to ouerthrowe and destroye the one, preferring loue and nature before the malice and calamitie of warres : thou shalt see, my sonne, and trust unto it, thou shalt no sooner marche forward to assault thy countrie, but thy foote shall tread upon thy mother's wombe, that brought thee first into this world."

The length of this quotation will be excused for its curiosity ; and it happily wants not the assistance of a comment. But matters may not always be so easily managed : — a plagiarism from *Anacreon* hath been detected.

- " The sun's a thief, and with his great attraction
- " Robs the vast sea. The moon's an arrant thief,
- " And her pale fire she snatches from the sun.
- " The sea's a thief, whose liquid surge resolves
- " The moon into salt tears. The earth's a thief,
- " That feeds and breeds by a composture stol'n
- " From gen'ral excrement: each thing's a thief."

" This (says Dr. Dodd) is a good deal in the manner of the celebrated *drinking Ode*, too well known to be inserted." Yet it may be alledged by those, who imagine Shakspeare to have been

generally able to think for himself, that the topicks are obvious, and their application is different.—But for argument's sake, let the parody be granted; and “our author (says some one) may be puzzled to prove, that there was a Latin translation of Anacreon at the time Shakspeare wrote his *Timon of Athens*.” This challenge is peculiarly unhappy: for I do not at present recollect any *other classick*, (if indeed, with great deference to Mynheer De Pauw, Anacreon may be numbered amongst them,) that was *originally* published with *two* Latin³ translations.

But this is not all. Puttenham in his *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589, quotes some one of a “reasonable good facilitie in translation, who finding *certaine* of Anacreon's Odes very well translated by Ronfard the French poet—comes our minion, and translates the same out of French into English:” and his strictures upon him evince the publication. Now this identical ode is to be met with in Ronfard! and as his works are in few hands, I will take the liberty of transcribing it:

“ La terre les eaux va boivant,
 “ L'arbre la boit par sa racine,
 “ La mer salée boit le vent,
 “ Et le soleil boit la marine.
 “ Le soleil est beu de la lune,
 “ Tout boit soit en haut ou en bas :

³ By Henry Stephens and Elias Andreas, Par. 1554. 4to. ten years before the birth of Shakspeare. The former version hath been ascribed without reason to John Dorat. Many other translators appeared before the end of the century: and particularly the ode in question was made popular by Buchanan, whose pieces were soon to be met with in almost every modern language.

“ Suivant ceste reigle commune,
 “ Pourquoi donc ne boirons-nous pas?”

Edit. Fol. p. 507.

I know not whether an observation or two relative to our author's acquaintance with Homer, be worth our investigation: The ingenious Mrs. Lenox observes on a passage of *Troilus and Cressida*, where Achilles is roused to battle by the death of Patroclus, that Shakspeare must *here* have had the *Iliad* in view, as “ the old story,”⁴ which in many places he hath faithfully copied, is absolutely silent with respect to this circumstance.”

And Mr. Upton is positive that the *sweet oblivious antidote*, inquired after by Macbeth, could be nothing but the *nepenthe* described in the *Odysssey*,

“ Νηπενθές τ' ἀχολόν τε, κακῶν ἐπίληθον ἀπάντων.”

I will not insist upon the translations by Chapman; as the first editions are without date, and it may be difficult to ascertain the exact time of their publication. But the *former* circumstance might have been learned from Alexander Barclay;⁵ and the *latter* more fully from Spenser,⁶ than from Homer himself.

⁴ It was originally drawn into *Englishe* by Caxton under the name of *The Recuyel of the Historyes of Troy*, from the French of the ryght venerable Person and worshipfull man Raoul le Feure, and fynyshe in the holy citee of Colen, the 19 day of Septembre, the yere of our Lord God, a thousand foure hundred sixty and enleuen. Wynkyn de Worde printed an edit. fol. 1503. and there have been several subsequent ones.

⁵ “ Who list this story of Patroclus to reade,” &c.

Ship of Fooles, 1570. p. 21.

⁶ “ Nepenthe is a drinck of foueragne grace,
 “ Deuized by the gods, for to asswage

“ But Shakspeare” persists Mr. Upton, “ hath some *Greek expressions*.” Indeed! — “ We have one in *Coriolanus* :

‘ _____ It is held
‘ That valour is the chiefeſt virtue, and
‘ Moſt dignifies the *haver*.’

and another in *Macbeth*, where Banquo addreſſes the *weird ſiſters* :

‘ _____ My noble partner
‘ You greet with preſent grace, and great prediction
‘ Of noble *having*.’

Gr. ἔχουσα. — and πρὸς τὸν ἔχοντα, to the *haver*.”

This was the common language of Shakspeare’s time. “ Lye in a water-bearer’s houſe !” ſays Maſter Mathew of Bobadil, “ a gentleman of his *havings* !”

Thus likewise John Davies in his *Pleasant Deſcant upon Engliſh Proverbs*, printed with his *Scourge of Folly*, about 1612 :

“ Do well and have well ! — neyther ſo ſill :
“ For ſome are good *doers*, whoſe *havings* are-ill.”

and Daniel the hiſtorian uſes it frequently. *Having* ſeems to be ſynonymous with *behaviour* in Gawin Douglas⁷ and the elder Scotch writers.

“ Harts grief, and bitter gall away to chace —
“ Inſtead thereof ſweet peace and quietage
“ It doth eſtabliſh in the troubled mynd,” &c.

Faerie Queene, 1596, Book IV. c. iii. ſt. 43.

⁷ It is very remarkable, that the biſhop is called by his countryman, Sir David Lindſey, in his *Complaint of our Souerane Lordis Papingo*,

Haver, in the sense of *possessor*, is every where met with: though unfortunately the *πρὸς τὸν ἔχοντα* of Sophocles produced as an authority for it, is suspected by Kuster,⁸ as good a critick in these matters, to have absolutely a different meaning.

But what shall we say to the learning of the Clown in Hamlet, "Ay, tell me that, and *unyoke*?" alluding to the *Βελυτὸς* of the Greeks: and Homer and his scholiast are quoted accordingly!

If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that the phrase might have been taken from husbandry, without much depth of reading; we may produce it from a *Dittie* of the workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to *Holinshed*, p. 1546:

" My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,

" My foot is sore, I can worke no more."

An expression of my Dame Quickly is next fastened upon, which you may look for in vain in the modern text; she calls some of the pretended fairies in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*:

" — Orphan⁹ heirs of fixed Destiny."

" In our *Inglish* rethorick the rose."

And Dunbar hath a similar expression in his beautiful poem of *The Goldin Terge*.

⁸ *Aristophanis Comœdiæ undecim. Gr. & Lat. Amst. 1710. Fol. p. 596.*

⁹ Dr. Warburton corrects *orphan* to *ouphen*; and not without plausibility, as the word *ouphes* occurs both before and afterward. But I fancy, in acquiescence to the vulgar doctrine, the address in this line is to a part of the *troop*, as mortals by birth, but adopted by the fairies: *orphans* with respect to their *real* parents, and now only dependant on

“ And how elegant is this,” quoth Mr. Upton, supposing the word to be used, as a Grecian would have used it? “ὀφθαλμὸς ἀβ ὀφθαλμὸς — acting in darkness and obscurity.

Mr. Heath assures us, that the bare mention of such an interpretation, is a sufficient refutation of it: and his critical word will be rather taken in Greek than in English: in the same hands therefore I will venture to leave all our author’s knowledge of the *old comedy*, and his etymological learning in the word, *Desdemona*.²

Surely poor Mr. Upton was very little acquainted with *fairies*, notwithstanding his laborious study of Spenser. The last authentick account of them is from our countryman William Lilly; ³ and it by no means agrees with the *learned* interpretation: for the *angelical creatures* appeared in his *Hursth wood* in a *most illustrious glory*, — “and indeed, (says the sage,) it is not given to many persons to endure their *glorious aspects*.”

The only use of transcribing these things, is to shew what absurdities men for ever run into, when

Destiny herself. A few lines from Spenser will sufficiently illustrate the passage:

“ The man whom *heavens* have ordain’d to bee

“ The spouse of *Britomart*, is *Arthegall*:

“ He wonneth in the land of *fayeree*,

“ Yet is no *fay* borne, ne sib at all

“ To elves, but sprong of seed *terrestrial*,

“ And whilome by false *fairies* stolen away,

“ Whyles yet in infant cradle he did crall, ” &c.

Edit. 1590, Book III. c. iii. st. 26.

² *Revisal*, p. 75. 323. and 561.

³ *History of his Life and Times*, p. 102. preserved by his dupe, Mr. Ashmole,

they lay down an hypothesis, and afterward seek for arguments in the support of it. What else could induce this man, by no means a bad scholar, to doubt whether *Truepenny* might not be derived from *Τρύπανον*; and quote upon us with much parade an old scholiast on Aristophanes?—I will not stop to confute him: nor take any notice of two or three more expressions, in which he was pleased to suppose some learned meaning or other; all which he might have found in every writer of the time, or still more easily in the vulgar translation of the Bible, by consulting the Concordance of Alexander Cruden.

But whence have we the plot of *Timon*, except from the Greek of Lucian?—The editors and criticks have been never at a greater loss than in their enquiries of this sort; and the source of a tale hath been often in vain sought abroad, which might easily have been found at home: my good friend, the very ingenious editor of the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, hath shewn our author to have been sometimes contented with a legendary ballad.

The story of the *misanthrope* is told in almost every collection of the time; and particularly in two books, with which Shakspeare was intimately acquainted; the *Palace of Pleasure*, and the *English Plutarch*. Indeed from a passage in an old play, called *Jack Drum's Entertainment*, I conjecture that he had before made his appearance on the stage.

Were this a proper place for such a disquisition, I could give you many cases of this kind. We are sent for instance to Cinthio for the plot of *Measure for Measure*, and Shakspeare's judgement hath been

attacked for some deviations from him in the conduct of it: when probably all he knew of the matter was from madam Isabella in the *Heptameron* of Whetstone.⁴ *Ariosto* is continually quoted for the fable of *Much ado about nothing*; but I suspect our poet to have been satisfied with the *Geneura* of Turberville.⁵ *As you like it* was certainly borrowed, if we believe Dr. Grey, and Mr. Upton, from the *Coke's Tale of Gamelyn*; which by the way was not printed till a century afterward: when in truth the old bard, who was no hunter of MSS. contented himself solely with Lodge's *Rosalynd*, or Euphues' *Golden Legacye*, quarto, 1590. The story of *All's well that ends well*, or, as I suppose it to have been sometimes called, *Love's Labour Wonne*,⁶ is originally indeed the property of Boccace,⁷ but it came

⁴ Lond. 4to. 1582. She reports in the fourth dayes exercise, the rare *Historie of Promos and Cassandra*. A marginal note informs us, that Whetstone was the author of the *Commedie* on that subject; which likewise might have fallen into the hands of Shakspeare.

⁵ "The tale is a pretie comical matter, and hath bin written in English verse some few years past, learnedly and with good grace, by M. George Turberuil." Harrington's *Ariosto*, fol. 1591. p. 39.

⁶ See Meres's *Wits Treasure*, 1598. p. 282.

⁷ Our ancient poets are under greater obligations to Boccace, than is generally imagined. Who would suspect, that Chaucer hath borrowed from an Italian the facetious tale of the *Miller of Trumpington*?

Mr. Dryden observes on the epick performance, *Palamon and Arcite*, a poem little inferior in his opinion to the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*, that the name of its author is wholly lost, and Chaucer is now become the original. But he is mistaken: this too was the work of Boccace, and printed at Ferrara in folio, *con il commento di Andrea Baffi*, 1475. I have seen a

immediately to Shakspeare from Painter's *Giletta of Narbon*.⁸ Mr. Langbaine could not conceive, whence the story of *Pericles* could be taken, "not meeting in history with any such *Prince of Tyre*;" yet his legend may be found at large in old Gower, under the name of *Appolynus*.⁹

Pericles is one of the plays omitted in the latter editions, as well as the early folios, and not improperly; though it was published many years before the death of Shakspeare, with his name in the title-page. Aulus Gellius informs us, that some plays are ascribed absolutely to Plautus, which he only *re-touched* and *polished*; and this is undoubtedly the case with our author likewise. The revival of this performance, which Ben Jonson calls *stale* and *mouldy*, was probably his earliest attempt in the drama. I know, that another of these discarded pieces, *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, hath been frequently called so; but most certainly it was not written by our poet at all: nor indeed was it printed in his life-time. The fact on which it is built, was perpetrated no sooner than 1604:² much too late for

copy of it, and a translation into modern Greek, in the noble library of the very learned and communicative Dr. Askew.

It is likewise to be met with in old French, under the title of *La Théséide* de Jean Boccace, contenant les belles & chastes amours de deux jeunes Chevaliers Thébains *Arcite & Palemon*.

⁸ In the first Vol. of the *Palace of Pleasure*, 4to. 1566.

⁹ *Confessio Amantis*, printed by T. Berthelet, fol. 1532. p. 175, &c.

² "William Caluerley, of Caluerley in Yorkshire, Esquire, murdered two of his owne children in his owne house, then stabde his wife into the body with full intent to haue killed her, and then instantlie with like fury went from his house,

so mean a performance from the hand of Shakspeare.

Sometimes a very little matter detects a forgery. You may remember a play called *The Double Falshood*, which Mr. Theobald was desirous of palming upon the world for a posthumous one of Shakspeare; and I see it is classed as such in the last edition of the Bodleian catalogue. Mr. Pope himself, after all the strictures of Scriblerus,³ in a letter to Aaron Hill, supposes it of that age; but a mistaken accent determines it to have been written since the middle of the last century:

“ ————— This late example
 “ Of base Henriquez, bleeding in me now,
 “ From each good *áspect* takes away my trust.”

And in another place,

“ You have an *áspect*, fir, of wondrous wisdom.”

The word *áspect*, you perceive, is here accented on the *first* syllable, which, I am confident, in *any* sense of it, was never the case in the time of Shakspeare; though it may sometimes appear to be so, when we do not observe a preceding *elision*.

to haue slaine his yongest childe at nurse, but was preuented. Hee was prest to death in Yorke the 5 of August, 1604.” *Edm. Howes’ Continuation of John Stowe’s Summarie*, 8vo. 1607, p. 574. The story appeared before in a 4to. pamphlet, 1605. It is omitted in the folio chronicle, 1631.

³ These, however, he assures Mr. Hill, were the property of Dr. Arbuthnot.

⁴ Thus a line in Hamlet’s description of the Player, should be printed as in the old folios:

“ Tears in his eyes, distraction in’s *aspéct*.”
 agreeably to the accent in a hundred other places.

Some of the professed imitators of our old poets have not attended to this and many other *minutiæ* : I could point out to you several performances in the respective styles of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakspeare, which the *imitated* bard could not possibly have either read or construed.

This very accent hath troubled the annotators on Milton. Dr. Bentley observes it to be "a *tone* different from the present use." Mr. Manwaring, in his *Treatise of Harmony and Numbers*, very solemnly informs us, that "this verse is defective both in accent and quantity, B. III. v. 266 :

' His words here ended, but his meek *aspect*
' Silent yet spake. — — '

Here (says he) a syllable is *acuted* and *long*, whereas it should be *short* and *graded*!"

And a still more extraordinary gentleman, one Green, who published a specimen of a *new version* of the *Paradise Lost*, into BLANK verse, "by which that amazing work is brought somewhat nearer the summit of perfection," begins with correcting a blunder in the fourth book, v. 540:

" ————— The setting sun
" Slowly descended, and with right *aspect* —
" Levell'd his evening rays. — — "

Not so in the *new version*:

" Meanwhile the setting sun descending slow —
" Level'd with *aspect* right his ev'ning rays. "

Enough of such commentators. — — The celebrated Dr. Dee had a *spirit*, who would sometimes condescend to correct him, when peccant in *quantity*:

and it had been kind of him to have a little assisted the *wights* abovementioned.—Milton affected the *antique*; but it may seem more extraordinary, that the old accent should be adopted in *Hudibras*.

After all, *The Double Falshood* is superior to Theobald. One passage, and one only in the whole play, he pretended to have written:

“ ————— Strike up, my masters;
 “ But touch the strings with a religious softness:
 “ Teach sound to languish through the night’s dull ear,
 “ Till melancholy start from her lazy couch,
 “ And carelessness grow convert to attention.”

These lines were particularly admired; and his vanity could not resist the opportunity of claiming them: but his claim had been more easily allowed to *any other* part of the performance.

To whom then shall we ascribe it?—Somebody hath told us, who should seem to be a *nostrum-monger* by his argument, that, let *accents* be how they will, it is called *an original play of William Shakspeare* in the *King’s Patent* prefixed to Mr. Theobald’s edition, 1728, and consequently there *could* be no fraud in the matter. Whilst, on the contrary, the *Irish* laureat, Mr. Victor, remarks, (and were it true, it would be certainly decisive) that the plot is borrowed from a novel of Cervantes, not published till the year after Shakspeare’s death. But unluckily the same novel appears in a part of *Don Quixote*, which was printed in Spanish, 1605, and in English by Shelton, 1612.—The same reasoning however, which exculpated our author from *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, may be applied on the present occasion.

But you want *my* opinion:—and from every mark of style and manner, I make no doubt of ascribing it to Shirley. Mr. Langbaine informs us, that he left some plays in MS.—These were written about the time of the *Restoration*, when the *accent* in question was more generally altered.

Perhaps the mistake arose from an *abbreviation* of the name. Mr. Doddsley knew not that the tragedy of *Andromana* was Shirley's, from the very same cause. Thus a whole stream of biographers tell us, that Marston's plays were printed at London, 1633, "by the care of *William Shakspeare*, the famous comedian."—Here again I suppose, in some transcript, the real publisher's name, *William Sheares*, was *abbreviated*. No one hath protracted the life of Shakspeare beyond 1616, except Mr. Hume; who is pleased to add a year to it, in contradiction to all manner of evidence.

Shirley is spoken of with contempt in *Mac Flecknoe*; but his imagination is sometimes fine to an extraordinary degree. I recollect a passage in the fourth book of the *Paradise Lost*, which hath been suspected of *imitation*, as a *prettiness* below the genius of Milton: I mean, where *Uriel* glides *backward and forward* to heaven on a *sun-beam*. Dr. Newton informs us, that this might possibly be hinted by a picture of Annibal Caracci in the King of France's cabinet: but I am apt to believe that Milton had been struck with a portrait in Shirley. Fernando, in the comedy of *The Brothers*, 1652, describes Jacinta at *vestpers*:

- " Her eye did seem to labour with a tear,
 " Which suddenly took birth, but overweigh'd
 " With its own swelling, drop'd upon her bosome;

D

" Which by reflexion of her light, appear'd
 " As nature meant her sorrow for an ornament :
 " After, her looks grew chearfull, and I saw
 " A smile shoot gracefull upward from her eyes,
 " As if they had gain'd a victory o'er grief,
 " And with it many beams twist'd themselves,
 " Upon whose golden threads the angels walk
 " To and again from heaven.⁵ — "

You must not think me infected with the spirit of Lauder, if I give you another of Milton's imitations:

" ————— The swan with arch'd neck
 " Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 " Her state with oary feet." Book VII. v. 438, &c.

" The ancient poets; says Mr. Richardson, have not hit upon this beauty; so lavish have they been in their descriptions of the *swan*. Homer calls the swan *long-necked*, *δελιχοδελρον*; but how much more *pittoresque*, if he had *arch'd* this length of neck?"

For *this beauty* however, Milton was beholden to Donne; whose name, I believe, at present is better known than his writings:

" ————— Like a ship in her full trim,
 " A *swan*, so white that you may unto him
 " Compare all whitenesse, but himsele to none,
 " Glided along, and as he glided watch'd,
 " And with his *arch'd neck* this poore fish catch'd. — "
Progresse of the Soul, st. 24.

Middleton, in an obscure play called *A Game at Chess*, hath some very pleasing lines on a similar occasion:

" Upon those lips, the sweete fresh buds of youth,
 " The holy dewe of prayer lies like pearle,
 " Dropt from the opening eye-lids of the morne
 " Upon the bashfull rose. — "

Those highly finished landscapes, the *Seasons*, are indeed copied from nature, but Thomson sometimes recollected the hand of his master:

“ ————— The stately sailing swan
 “ Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale;
 “ And arching proud his neck with oary feet,
 “ Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier isle,
 “ Protective of his young.——”

But to return, as we say on other occasions.— Perhaps the advocates for Shakspeare's knowledge of the Latin language may be more successful. Mr. Gildon takes the van. “ It is plain, that he was acquainted with the fables of antiquity very well: that some of the arrows of Cupid are pointed with lead, and others with gold, he found in Ovid; and what he speaks of Dido, in Virgil: nor do I know any translation of these poets so ancient as Shakspeare's time.” The passages on which these sagacious remarks are made, occur in *The Midsummer Night's Dream*; and exhibit, we see, a clear proof of acquaintance with the Latin classics. But we are not answerable for Mr. Gildon's ignorance; we might have been told of Caxton and Douglas, of Surrey and Stanyhurst, of Phaer and Twyne, of Fleming and Golding, of Turberville and Churchyard! but these fables were easily known without the help of either the originals or the translations. The fate of Dido had been sung very early by Gower, Chaucer, and Lydgate; Marlowe had even already introduced her to the stage: and Cupid's arrows appear with their characteristic differences in Surrey, in Sidney, in Spenser, and every sonneteer of the time. Nay, their very names were

exhibited long before in *The Romaunt of the Rose*: a work, you may venture to look into, notwithstanding Master Prynne hath so positively assured us, on the word of John Gerson, that the author is most certainly damned, if he did not care for a serious repentance.⁶

Mr. Whalley argues in the same manner, and with the same success. He thinks a passage in *The Tempest*,

“ ——— High queen of state,
“ Great Juno comes; I know her by her gait.”

a remarkable instance of Shakspeare's knowledge of ancient poetick story; and that the hint was furnished by the *divûm incedo regina* of Virgil.⁷

You know, honest John Taylor, the *Water-poet*, declares that *he never learned his Accidence*, and that *Latin and French* were to him *Heathen-Greek*; yet

⁶ Had our zealous puritan been acquainted with the real crime of De Mehun, he would not have joined in the clamour against him. Poor Jehan, it seems, had raised the expectations of a monastery in France, by the legacy of a great chest, and the weighty contents of it; but it proved to be filled with nothing better than *vetches*. The friars enraged at the ridicule and disappointment, would not suffer him to have christian burial. See the Hon. Mr. Barrington's very learned and curious *Observations on the Statutes*, 4to. 1766, p. 24. From the *Annales d'Aquitaine. Par. 1537.*

Our author had his full share in distressing the spirit of this restless man. “Some Play-books are grown from *Quarto* into *Folio*; which yet bear so good a price and sale, that I cannot but with griefe relate it.—*Shackspeer's Plaies* are printed in the best Crowne-paper, far better than most *Bibles*!”

⁷ Others would give up this passage for the *vera incessu patuit dea*; but I am not able to see any improvement in the matter: even supposing the poet had been speaking of Juno, and no previous translation were extant.

by the help of Mr. Whalley's argument, I will prove him a *learned* man, in spite of every thing, he may say to the contrary: for thus he makes a *gallant* address his *lady*:

"Most inestimable magazine of beauty — in whom *the port and majesty of Juno*, the wisdom of *Love's* braine-bred girle, and the feature of *Cytherea*,⁸ have their domestical habitation."

In *The Merchant of Venice* we have an oath "By *two-headed Janus*;" and here, says Dr. Warburton, Shakspeare shews his knowledge in the antique: and so again does the *Water-poet*, who describes Fortune,

"Like a *Janus* with a *double face*."

But Shakspeare hath somewhere a *Latin motto*, saith Dr. Sewell; and so hath John Taylor, and a whole poem upon it into the bargain.

You perceive, my dear Sir, how vague and inde-

⁸ This passage recalls to my memory a very extraordinary fact. A few years ago, at a great court on the continent, a countryman of ours of high rank and character, [Sir C. H. W.] exhibited with many other candidates his complimentary epigram on the birth-day, and carried the prize in triumph:

"O regina orbis prima & pulcherrima: ridens

"Es Venus, incedens Juno, Minerva loquens."

literally stolen from Angerianus,

"Tres quondam nudas vidit Priameius heros

"Luce deas; video tres quoque luce deas,

"Hoc majus; tres uno in corpore: *Cælia* ridens

"*Est Venus, incedens Juno, Minerva loquens.*"

Delitiæ Ital. Poet. by Gruter, under the anagrammatic name of *Ranutius Gherus*, 1608. V. I. p. 189.

Perhaps the latter part of the epigram was met with in a whimsical book, which had its day of fame, *Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy*, fol. 1652. 6th edit. p. 520.

terminate such arguments must be: for in fact this *sweet swan of Thames*, as Mr. Pope calls him, hath more scraps of Latin, and allusions to antiquity than are any where to be met with in the writings of Shakspeare. I am sorry to trouble you with trifles, yet what must be done, when grave men insist upon them?

It should seem to be the opinion of some modern criticks, that the personages of classick land began only to be known in England in the time of Shakspeare; or rather, that he particularly had the honour of introducing them to the notice of his countrymen.

For instance, — *Rumour painted full of tongues*, gives us a prologue to one of the parts of *Henry the Fourth*; and, says Dr. Dodd, Shakspeare had doubtless a view to either Virgil or Ovid in their description of Fame.

But why so? Stephen Hawes, in his *Pastime of Pleasure* had long before exhibited her in the same manner,

“ A goodly lady envyrone about

“ With *tongues* of fyre. —”⁸

and so had Sir Thomas More in one of his *Pageants*:⁹

“ *Fame* I am called, mervayle you nothing

“ Though with *tonges* I am compassed all rounde.”

not to mention her elaborate portrait by Chaucer, in *The Boke of Fame*; and by John Higgins, one of the assistants in *The Mirrour for Magistrates*, in his Legend of King Albanacte.

⁸ Cap. 1. 4to. 1555.

⁹ Amongst “ the things, which Mayster More wrote in his youth for his pastime,” prefixed to his *Workes*, 1557. Fol.

A very liberal writer on the *Beauties of Poetry*, who had been more conversant in the ancient literature of other countries, than his own, "cannot but wonder, that a poet, whose classical images are composed of the finest parts, and breathe the very spirit of ancient mythology, should pass for being illiterate :

" See, what a grace was seated on this brow !

" Hyperion's curls : the front of Jove himself :

" An eye like Mars to threaten and command :

" A station like the herald Mercury,

" New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill." *Hamlet.*

Illiterate is an ambiguous term : the question is, whether poetick history could be only known by an adept in *languages*. It is no reflection on this ingenious gentleman, when I say, that I use on this occasion the words of a *better* critick, who yet was not willing to carry the *illiteracy* of our poet *too far* : — " They who are in such astonishment at the *learning* of Shakspeare, forget that the pagan imagery was familiar to all the poets of his time ; and that abundance of this sort of learning was to be picked up from almost every English book, that he could take into his hands." For not to insist upon Stephen Bateman's *Golden Booke of the Leaden Goddes*, 1577, and several other laborious compilations on the subject, all this and much more mythology might as perfectly have been learned from the *Testament of Creseide*,² and the *Fairy Queen*,³ as from a regular Pantheon or Polymetis himself.

² Printed amongst the works of Chaucer, but really written by Robert Henderson, or Henryson, according to other authorities.

³ It is observable that *Hyperion* is used by Spenser with the same error in quantity.

Mr. Upton, not contented with *heathen* learning, when he finds it in the text, must necessarily super-add it, when it appears to be wanting; because Shakspeare most certainly hath lost it by accident!

In *Much, ado about Nothing*, Don Pedro says of the insensible Benedick, "He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little *hangman* dare not shoot at him."

This mythology is not recollected in the ancients, and therefore the critick hath no doubt but his author wrote — "*Henchman*, — *a page*, *pufio* : and *this* word seeming too hard for the printer, he translated the little urchin into a *hangman*, a character no way belonging to him."

But this character was not borrowed from the ancients; — it came from the *Arcadia* of Sir Philip Sidney :

- " Millions of yeares this old drivell Cupid lives ;
- " While still more wretch, more wicked he doth prove :
- " Till now at length that Jove an office gives,
- " (At Juno's suite who much did Argus love)
- " In this our world a *hangman* for to be
- " Of all those fooles that will have all they see."

B. II. c. 14.

I know it may be objected on the authority of such biographers as Theophilus Cibber, and the writer of the Life of Sir Philip, prefixed to the modern editions ; that the *Arcadia* was not published before 1613, and consequently too late for this imitation : but I have a copy in my own possession, printed for W. Ponsonbie, 1590. 4to. which hath escaped the notice of the industrious Ames, and the rest of our typographical antiquaries.

Thus likewise every word of antiquity is to be cut down to the classical standard.

In a note on the Prologue to *Troilus and Cressida*, (which, by the way, is not met with in the *quarto*.) Mr. Theobald informs us, that the very names of the gates of Troy, have been barbarously demolished by the editors: and a deal of learned dust he makes in setting them right again; much however to Mr. Heath's satisfaction. Indeed the learning is modestly withdrawn from the later editions, and we are quietly instructed to read,

“ Dardan, and Thymbria, Ilia, Scæa, Troian,
“ And Antenorides.”

But had he looked into the *Troy boke* of Lydgate, instead of puzzling himself with Dares Phrygius, he would have found the horrid demolition to have been neither the work of Shakspeare nor his editors:

“ Therto his cyte | compassed enuyrowne
“ Hadde gates VI to entre into the towne :
“ The first of all | and strengest eke with all,
“ Largest also | and moſte pryncypall,
“ Of myghty byldyng | alone pereleſs,
“ Was by the kyng called | Dardanydes ;
“ And in ſtorye | lyke as it is founde,
“ Tymbria | was named the ſeconde ;
“ And the thyrde | called Helyas,
“ The fourthe gate | hyghte alſo Cetheas ;
“ The fyfthe Trojana, | the ſyxth Anthonydes,
“ Stronge and myghty | both in werre and pes.”⁴

Lond. empr. by R. Pynſon, 1513. fol. B. II. ch. xi.

⁴ The *Troye Boke* was ſomewhat modernized, and reduced into regular ſtanſas, about the beginning of the laſt century, under the name of “ *The Life and Death of Hector* — who fought a hundred mayne Battailles in open Field againſt the

Our excellent friend Mr. Hurd hath borne a noble testimony on our side of the question, "Shakspeare," says this true critick, "owed the felicity of freedom from the bondage of classcal superstition, to the want of what is called the *advantage* of a learned

Grecians ; wherein there were slaine on both Sides *Fourteene Hundred and Sixe Thousand Fourscore and Sixe Men.*" Fol. no date. This work, Dr. Fuller and several other criticks have erroneously quoted as the *original* ; and observe in consequence, that "if Chaucer's coin were of greater weight for deeper learning, Lydgate's were of a more refined standard for purer language : so that one might mistake him for a modern writer !"

Let me here make an observation for the benefit of the next editor of Chaucer. Mr. Urry, probably misled by his predecessor, Speght, was determined, *Procrustes-like*, to force every line in the *Canterbury Tales* to the same standard : but a precise number of syllables was not the object of our old poets. Lydgate, after the example of his master, very fairly acknowledges,

" Well wot I | moche thing is wronge,

" Falsely metryd | both of short and longe."

and Chaucer himself was persuaded, that the *rime* might possibly be

" ————— Somewhat agreable,

" Though some verse faile in a syllable."

In short, the attention was directed to the *cæsural pause*, as the *grammarians* call it ; which is carefully marked in every line of Lydgate : and Gascoigne in his *Certayne Notes of Instruction concerning the making of Verse*, observes very truly of Chaucer, "Whosoever do peruse and well consider his worke, he shall find, that although his lines are not always of one selfe same number of syllables, yet beyng redde by one that hath understanding, the longest verse and that which hath most syllables in it, will fall to the eare correspondent unto that which hath fewest syllables in it : and likewise that whiche hath in it fewest syllables shall be found yet to consist of wordes that hath suche naturall founde, as may seeme equall in length to a verse which hath many moe syllables of lighter accents." 4to. 1575.

education.—This, as well as a vast superiority of genius, hath contributed to lift this astonishing man to the glory of being esteemed the most original *thinker* and *speaker*, since the times of Homer." And hence indisputably the amazing variety of style and manner, unknown to all other writers: an argument of *itself* sufficient to emancipate Shakspeare from the supposition of a *classical training*. Yet, to be honest, *one* imitation is *fastened* on our poet: which hath been insisted upon likewise by Mr. Upton and Mr. Whalley. You remember it in the famous speech of Claudio in *Measure for Measure*:

"Ay, but to die and go we know not where!" &c.

Most certainly the ideas of "a spirit bathing in fiery floods," of residing "in thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice," or of being "imprisoned in the viewless winds," are not *original* in our author; but I am not sure, that they came from the *Platonic hell* of Virgil.⁵ The monks also had their hot and their cold hell: "The fyrste is fyre that ever brenneth, and never gyveth lighte," says an old homily:⁶ — "The seconde is passyng colde, that yf a grete hylle of fyre were casten therin, it sholde torn to yce." One of their legends, well remembered in the time of Shakspeare, gives us a dialogue between a bishop and a soul tormented in a

⁵ " ————— Alia panduntur inanes

" Suspensæ ad ventos: aliis sub gurgite vasto

" Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni."

⁶ At the end of the *festyvall*, drawn oute of *Legenda aurea*, 4to. 1508. It was first printed by Caxton, 1483. "in helpe of such clerkes who excuse theym for defaute of bokes, and also by symplenes of connyngc."

pièce of ice, which was brought to cure a *grete brenning heate* in his foot:⁷ take care you do not interpret this the *gout*, for I remember M. Menage quotes a *canon* upon us :

“ Si quis dixerit episcopum PODAGRA laborare, anathema sit.”

Another tells us of the foul of a monk fastened to a rock, which the winds were to blow about for a twelvemonth, and purge of its enormities. Indeed this doctrine was before now introduced into poetick fiction, as you may see in a poem “ where the lover declareth his pains to exceed far the pains of hell,” among the many miscellaneous ones subjoined to the works of Surrey. Nay, a very learned and inquisitive Brother-Antiquary, our Greek Professor,* hath observed to me on the authority of Blefkenius, that this was the ancient opinion of the inhabitants of Iceland;⁸ who were certainly very little read either in the *poet* or the *philosopher*.

After all, Shakspeare's curiosity might lead him to *translations*. Gawin Douglas really changes the *Platonick hell* into the “ punytion of faulis in purgatory:” and it is observable, that when the Ghost informs Hamlet of his doom there,

“ Till the foul crimes done in his days of nature
“ Are burnt and purg'd away. — ”

the expression is very similar to the bishop's: “ I will give you his version as concisely as I can; “ It is a nedeful thyng to suffer panis and torment —

⁷ On all soules daye, p. 152.

* Mr. afterwards Dr. Lort.

⁸ *Islandiæ Descript. Ludg. Bat.* 1607. p. 46.

sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uthir sum: — thus the mony vices —

‘ Contrakkit in the corporis be done away

‘ And purgit. — ” *Sixte Booke of Eneados*, fol. p. 191.

It seems, however, “ that Shakspeare *himself* in the *Tempest* hath translated some expressions of *Virgil*: witness the *O dea certe*.” I presume, we are here directed to the passage, where Ferdinand says of Miranda, after hearing the songs of Ariel,

“ ————— Most sure, the goddess

“ On whom these airs attend.”

and so *very small Latin* is sufficient for this formidable translation, that if it be thought any honour to our poet, I am loath to deprive him of it; but his honour is not built on such a sandy foundation. Let us turn to a *real translator*, and examine whether the idea might not be fully comprehended by an English reader; *supposing* it necessarily borrowed from *Virgil*. Hexameters in our own language are almost forgotten; we will quote therefore this time from *Stanyhurst*:

“ O to thee, fayre virgin, what terme may rightly be fitted?

“ Thy tongue, thy visage no mortal frayltie resembleth.

“ — No doubt, a godesse!” Edit. 1583.

Gabriel Harvey desired only to be “ *epitaph’d*, the inventor of the English *hexameter*,” and for a while every one would be *halting on Roman feet*; but the ridicule of our fellow-collegian Hall, in one of his *Satires*, and the reasoning of Daniel, in his *Defence of Rhyme* against Campion, presently reduced us to our original Gothick.

But to come nearer the purpose, what will you say, if I can shew you, that Shakspeare, when, in the favourite phrase, he had a Latin poet *in his eye*, most assuredly made use of a translation?

Prospero, in the *Tempest*, begins the address to his attendant *spirits*,

“ Ye elves of hills, of standing lakes, and groves.”

This speech, Dr. Warburton rightly observes to be borrowed from Medea in Ovid: and “it proves,” says Mr. Holt,⁹ “beyond contradiction, that Shakspeare was perfectly acquainted with the sentiments of the ancients on the subject of enchantments.” The original lines are these :

“ Auræque, & venti, montesque, amnesque, lacusque,
“ Diique omnes nemorum, diique omnes noctis adeste.”

It happens, however, that the translation by Arthur Golding² is by no means literal, and Shakspeare hath closely followed it :

“ Ye ayres and winds ; ye elves of hills, of brookes, of
woods alone,
“ Of standing lakes, and of the night approche ye everych
one.”

I think it is unnecessary to pursue this any further; especially as more powerful arguments await us.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, the Jew, as an apology for his cruelty to Antonio, rehearses many *sympa-*

⁹ In some remarks on the *Tempest*, published under the quaint title of *An Attempte to rescue that aunciente English Poet and Playwrighte, Maister Williaume Shakespeare, from the many Errours, faulselv charged upon him by certaine new-fangled Wiltes.* Lond. 8vo. 1749. p. 81.

² His work is dedicated to the Earl of Leicester in a long epistle in verse, from Berwick, April 20, 1567.

thies and *antipathies* for which *no reason* can be rendered :

“ Some love not a gaping pig —

“ And others when the *bagpipe* sings i’ th’ nose,

“ Cannot contain their urine for *affection*.”

This incident, Dr. Warburton supposes to be taken from a passage in Scaliger’s *Exercitationes* against *Cardan*: “*Narrabo tibi jocosam sympathiam Reguli Vasconis equitis : is dum viveret audito phormingis sono, urinam illico facere cogebatur.*” — “ And,” proceeds the Doctor, “ to make this jocular story still more ridiculous, Shakspeare, I suppose, translated *phorminx* by *bagpipes*.”

Here we seem fairly caught ; — for Scaliger’s work was never, as the term goes, *done into English*. But luckily in an old translation from the French of Peter le Loier, entitled, *A Treatise of Specters, or straunge Sights, Visions, and Apparitions appearing sensibly unto Men*, we have this identical story from Scaliger : and what is still more, a marginal note gives us in all probability the very fact alluded to, as well as the word of Shakspeare : “ Another gentleman of this quality liued of late in Deuon neere Excester, who could not endure the playing on a *bagpipe*.”³

We may just add, as some observation hath been made upon it, that *affection* in the sense of *sympathy*

³ M. Bayle hath delineated the singular character of our *fantastical* author. His work was originally translated by one Zacharie Jones. My edit. is in 4to. 1605. with an anonymous Dedication to the King: the Devonshire story was therefore well known in the time of Shakspeare. — The passage from Scaliger is likewise to be met with in *The Optick Glasse of Humors*, written, I believe, by T. Wombwell; and in several other places.

was formerly *technical*; and so used by Lord Bacon, Sir Kenelm Digby, and many other writers.

A single word in Queen Catherine's character of Wolsey, in *Henry VIII.* is brought by the Doctor as another argument for the learning of Shakspeare:

“ ——— He was a man
 “ Of an unbounded stomach, ever ranking
 “ Himself with princes; one that by *suggestion*
 “ Ty'd all the kingdom. Simony was fair play.
 “ His own opinion was his law: i'th' presence
 “ He would say untruths, and be ever double
 “ Both in his words and meaning. He was never,
 “ But where he meant to ruin, pitiful.
 “ His promises were, as he then was, mighty;
 “ But his performance, as he now is, nothing.
 “ Of his own body he was ill, and gave
 “ The clergy ill example.”

“ The word *suggestion*,” says the critick, “ is here used with great propriety, and *seeming* knowledge of the Latin tongue:” and he proceeds to settle the sense of it from *the late Roman writers and their glossers*. But Shakspeare's knowledge was from Holinshed, whom he follows *verbatim*:

“ This cardinal was of a great stomach, for he compted himself equal with princes, and by craftie *suggestion* got into his hands innumerable treasure: he forced little on simonie, and was not pitifull, and stood affectionate in his own opinion: in open presence he would lie and seie untruth, and was double both in speech and meaning: he would promise much and performe little: he was vicious of his bodie, and gaue the clergie euil example.” Edit. 1587. p. 922.

Perhaps after this quotation, you may not think, that Sir Thomas Hanmer, who reads *Tyth'd* — in-

stead of — *Ty'd all the kingdom*, deserves quite so much of Dr. Warburton's severity. — Indisputably the passage, like every other in the speech, is intended to express the meaning of the parallel one in the chronicle: it cannot therefore be credited, that any man, when the *original* was produced, should still choose to defend a *cant* acceptance; and inform us, perhaps, *seriously*, that in *gaming* language, from I know not what practice, to *tye* is to *equal*! A sense of the word, as far as I have yet found, *unknown* to our old writers; and, if *known*, would not surely have been used in *this* place by our author.

But let us turn from conjecture to Shakspeare's authorities. Hall, from whom the above description is copied by Holinshed, is very explicit in the demands of the Cardinal: who having insolently told the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, "For sothe I thinke, that *halfe* your substaunce were to litle," assures them by way of comfort at the end of his harangue, that *upon an average* the *tythe* should be sufficient; "Sers, speake not to breake that thyng that is concluded, for *some* shal not paie the *tenth* parte, and *some* more." — And again; "Thei saied, the Cardinall by visitacions, makying of abbottes, probates of testaments, graunting of faculties, licences, and other pollyngs in his courtes legantines, had made his *threasore egall with the kinges*." Edit. 1548. p. 138, and 143.

Skelton,⁴ in his *Why come ye not to Court*, gives us,

⁴ His poems are printed with the title of "Pithy, Pleasaunt, and Profitable Workes of Maister Skelton Poet Laureate." — "But," says Mr. Cibber, after several other writers, "how or by what interest he was made *Laureat*, or whether it was

after his rambling manner, a curious character of Wolfey :

“ ————— By and by
“ He will drynke us so dry

by a title he assumed to himself, cannot be determined.” This is an error pretty generally received, and it may be worth our while to remove it.

A facetious author says somewhere, that a *poet laureat*, in the modern idea, is a gentleman, who hath an annual stipend for reminding us of the *New Year*, and the *Birth-day* : but formerly a *Poet Laureat* was a real *university graduate*,

“ Skelton wore the laurell wreath,

“ And past in *schoels* ye knoe.”

says Churchyarde in a poem prefixed to his works. And Master Caxton in his Preface to *The Boke of Eneydos*, 1490. hath a passage, which well deserves to be quoted without abridgement : “ I praye mayster *John Skelton*, late created *poete laureate* in the *universite of Oxenforde*, to oversee and correcte thys sayd booke, and taddresse and expowne whereas shall be founde faulte, to theym that shall requyre it; for hym I knowe for suffycyent to expowne and Englyshe every dyfficulte that is therein; for he hath late translated the epytles of Tulle, and the book of Dyodorus Syculus, and diverse other workes, out of Latyn into Englyshe, not in rude and old language, but in polished and ornate termes, craftely, as he that hath redde *Vyrgyle*, *Ouyde*, *Tullye*, and all the other noble poets and oratours, to me unknownen : and also he hath redde the ix muses, and understands their musicalle scyences, and to whom of them eche scyence is appropred : I suppose he hath dronken of *Elycons* well ! ”

I find, from Mr. Baker's MSS. that our *laureat* was admitted *ad eundem* at Cambridge : “ An. Dom. 1493. & Hen. 7. nono. Conceditur *Johi Skelton* Poete in partibus transmarinis atque Oxon. Laureâ ornato, ut apud nos eâdem decoraretur.” And afterward, “ An. 1504-5 Conceditur *Johi Skelton*, Poetæ Laureat. quod possit stare eodem gradu hic, quo stetit Oxoniis, & quod possit uti habitu sibi concessio à Principe.”

See likewise Dr. Knight's *Life of Colet*, p. 122. And *Recherches sur les Poètes couronnés*, par M. l'Abbé du Resnel, in the *Mémoires de Littérature*, Vol. X. Paris, 4to. 1736.

" And sucke us so nye
 " That men shall scantly
 " Haue penny or halpennye
 " God faue hys noble grace
 " And graunt him a place
 " Endlesse to dwel
 " With the deuill of hel
 " For and he were there
 " We need neuer feare
 " Of the feendes blacke
 " For I undertake
 " He wold so brag and crake
 " That he wold than make
 " The deuils to quake
 " To shudder and to shake
 " Lyke a fier drake
 " And with a cole rake
 " Bruse them on a brake
 " And binde them to a stake
 " And set hel on fyre
 " At his owne desire
 " He is such a grym fyre!" Edit. 1568.

Mr. Upton and some other critickes have thought it very *scholar-like* in Hamlet to swear the Centinels on a *sword*: but this is for ever met with. For instance, in the *Passus Primus* of Pierce Plowman :

" Daudid in his daies dubbed knightes,
 " And did hem swere on her sword to serue truth euer."

And in *Hieronymo*, the common butt of our author, and the wits of the time, says Lorenzo to Pedrignano,

" Swear on this crosse, that what thou sayst is true —
 " But if I prove thee perjured and unjust,
 " This very *sword*, whereon thou took'st thine oath,
 " Shall be the worker of thy tragedy!"

We have therefore no occasion to go with Mr.

Garrick as far as the French of Brantôme to illustrate this ceremony:⁵ a *gentleman*, who will be always allowed the *first commentator* on Shakspeare, when he does not carry us beyond *himself*.

Mr. Upton, however, in the next place, produces a passage from *Henry VI.* whence he argues it to be very plain, that our author had not only read *Cicero's Offices*, but even more *critically* than many of the editors :

“ ——— This villain here,
 “ Being captain of a *pinnace*, threatens more
 “ Than *Bargulus*, the strong *Illyrian* pirate.”

So the *wight*, he observes with great exultation, is named by Cicero in the editions of Shakspeare's time, “ *Bargulus Illyrius latro* ;” though the modern editors have chosen to call him *Bardylis* :— “ and *thus* I found it in *two MSS.*” ——— And *thus* he might have found it in *two* translations, before Shakspeare was born. Robert Whytinton, 1533. calls him, “ *Bargulus* a pirate upon the see of *Illiry* ;” and Nicholas Grimald, about twenty years afterward, “ *Bargulus* the *Illyrian* robber.”⁶

But it had been easy to have checked Mr. Upton's exultation, by observing, that *Bargulus* does not appear in the *quarto*.—Which also is the case with some fragments of Latin verses, in the different *parts* of this *doubtful* performance.

⁵ Mr. Johnson's edit. Vol. VIII. p. 171.

⁶ I have met with a writer who tells us, that a translation of the *Offices* was printed by Caxton, in the year 1481 : but such a book never existed. It is a mistake for *Tullius of old Age*, printed with *The Boke of Frendshipe*, by John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. I believe the former was translated by William Wyrcestre, alias Botoner.

It is scarcely worth mentioning, that two or three more Latin passages, which are met with in our author, are immediately transcribed from the story or chronicle before him. Thus in *Henry V.* whose right to the kingdom of France is copiously demonstrated by the Archbishop:

- “ ————— There is no bar
 “ To make against your highness' claim to France,
 “ But this which they produce from Pharamond ;
 “ In terram Salicam mulieres nē succedant ;
 “ No woman shall succeed in Salike land :
 “ Which Salike land the French unjustly gloze
 “ To be the realm of France, and Pharamond
 “ The founder of this law and female bar.
 “ Yet their own authors faithfully affirm,
 “ That the land Salike lies in Germany,
 “ Between the floods of Sala and of Elve,” &c.

Archbishop Chichelie, says Holinshed, “ did much inueie against the surmised and false fained law Salike, which the Frenchmen alledge euer against the kings of England in barre of their just title to the crowne of France. The very words of that supposed law are these, In terram Salicam mulieres nē succedant, that is to saie, Into the Salike land let not women succeed; which the French glossers expound to be the realm of France, and that this law was made by King Pharamond: whereas yet their owne authors affirme, that the land Salike is in Germanie, betweene the rivers of Elbe and Sala,” &c. p. 545.

It hath lately been repeated from Mr. Guthrie's *Essay upon English Tragedy*, that the *portrait* of Macbeth's wife is copied from Buchanan, “ whose spirit, as well as words, is translated into the play of Shakspeare: and it had signified nothing to have

pored only on Holinshed for *facts*.”——“ Animus etiam, per se ferox, prope quotidianis conviciis uxoris (quæ omnium consiliorum ei erat conscia) stimulabatur.”——This is the whole, that Buchanan says of the *lady*, and truly I see no more *spirit* in the Scotch, than in the English chronicler. “The wordes of the three weïrd sisters also greatly encouraged him, [to the murder of Duncan] but specially his wife lay fore upon him to attempt the thing, as she that was very ambitious, brenning in unquenchable desire to beare the name of a queene.” Edit. 1577. p. 244.

This part of Holinshed is an abridgement of Johne Bellenden’s translation of the *noble clerk, Hector Boece*, imprinted at Edinburgh, in fol. 1541. I will give the passage at it is found there. “His wyfe impacient of lang tary (*as all wemen ar*) specially quhare they ar desirus of ony purpos, gaif hym gret artation to pursew the third weïrd, that sche micht be ane quene, calland hym oft tymis febyl cowart and nocht desyrus of honouris, sen he durst not assailze the thing with manheid and courage, quhilk is offerit to hym be beniuolence of fortoun. Howbeit findry otheris hes assailzeit sic thinges a fore with maist terribyl jeopardyis, quhen they had not sic sickernes to succed in the end of thair lauboris as he had.” P. 173.

But we can *demonstrate*, that Shakspeare had not the story from Buchanan. According to *him*, the weïrd-sisters salute Macbeth, “Una Angulæ Thammum, altera Moraviæ, tertia regem.”——Thane of Angus, and of Murray, &c. but according to Holinshed, immediately from Bellenden, as it stands in Shakspeare: “The first of them spake and sayde,

All hayle Makbeth, thane of Glammis,—the second of them said, Hayle Makbeth, thane of Cawder; but the third sayde, All hayle Makbeth, that hereafter shall be *king of Scotland*." P. 243.

" 1. *Witch*. All hail, Macbeth ! Hail to thee, thane of Glamis !

" 2. *Witch*. All hail, Macbeth ! Hail to thee, thane of Cawdor !

" 3. *Witch*. All hail, Macbeth ! that shalt be *king* hereafter !"

Here too our poet found the equivocal predictions, on which his hero so fatally depended. " He had learned of certain wyfards, how that he ought to take heede of Macduffe ;——and surely hereupon had he put Macduffe to death, but a certaine witch whom he had in great trust, had tolde, that he should neuer be slain with *man born of any woman*, nor vanquished till the wood of Bernane came to the castell of Dunfinane." P. 244. And the scene between Malcolm and Macduff in the fourth act is almost literally taken from the Chronicle.

Macbeth was certainly one of Shakspeare's latest productions, and it might possibly have been suggested to him by a little performance on the same subject at Oxford, before King James, 1605. I will transcribe my notice of it from Wake's *Rex Platonicus* : " Fabulæ ansam dedit antiqua de Regiâ profapiâ historiola apud Scoto-Britannos celebrata, quæ narrat tres olim Sibyllas occurrissse duobus Scotiæ proceribus, Macbetho & Banchoni, & illum prædixissse Regem futurum, sed Regem nullum geniturum; hunc Regem non futurum, sed Reges geniturum multos. Vaticinii veritatem rerum

eventus comprobavit. Banchonis enim è stirpe potentissimus Jacobus oriundus." P. 29.

A stronger argument hath been brought from the plot of *Hamlet*. Dr. Grey and Mr. Whalley assure us, that for *this*, Shakspeare *must* have read *Saxo Grammaticus* in Latin, for no translation hath been made into any modern language. But the truth is, he did not take it from *Saxo* at all; a novel called *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, was his original: a fragment of which, in *black letter*, I have been favoured with by a very curious and intelligent gentleman, to whom the lovers of Shakspeare will some time or other owe great obligations.

It hath indeed been said, that "IF *such an history exists*, it is almost impossible that any poet unacquainted with the Latin language (supposing his perceptive faculties to have been ever so acute,) could have caught the characteristical madness of Hamlet, described by *Saxo Grammaticus*⁷ so happily as it is delineated by Shakspeare.

Very luckily, our fragment gives us a part of Hamlet's speech to his *mother*, which sufficiently replies to this observation:—"It was not without cause, and juste occasion, that my gestures, countenances and words seeme to proceed from a mad-man, and that I desire to haue all men esteeme mee wholly depriued of sence and reasonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that hath

⁷ "Falstatis enim (Hamlethus) alienus haberi cupidus, ita astutiam veriloquio permiscebat, ut nec dictis veracitas deesset, nec acuminis modus verorum iudicio prouderetur." This is quoted, as it had been before, in Mr. Guthrie's *Essay on Tragedy*, with a *small* variation from the *Original*. See edit. fol. 1644. p. 50.

made no conscience to kill his owne brother, (accustomed to murthers, and allured with desire of gouernement without controll in his treasons,) will not spare to satie himselfe with the like crueltie, in the blood, and flesh of the loyns of his brother, by him massacred: and therefore it is better for me to sayne madnesse then to use my right senses as nature hath bestowed them upon me. The bright shining cleannes therof I am forced to hide vnder this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun doth his beams vnder some great cloud, when the wether in summer time ouercasteth: the face of a mad man, serueth to couer my gallant countenance, and the gestures of a fool are fit for me, to the end that guiding my self wisely therin I may preferue my life for the Danes and the memory of my late deceased father, for that the desire of reuenging his death is so ingrauen in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take such and so great vengeance, that these countryes shall for euer speake thereof. Neuertheles I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making ouer great hast, I be now the cause of mine own sodaine ruine and ouerthrow, and by that meanes, end, before I beginne to effect my hearts desire: hee that hath to doe with a wicked, disloyall, cruell, and discourteous man, must vse craft, and politike inuentions, such as fine witte can best imagine, not to discouer his interprise: for seeing that by force I cannot affect my desire, reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subiltie, and secret practises to proceed therein."

But to put the matter out of all question, my communicative friend, above-mentioned, Mr. Capell, (for why should I not give myself the credit

of his name?) hath been fortunate enough to procure from the collection of the Duke of Newcastle, a *complete* copy of the *Hystorie of Hamblet*, which proves to be a translation from the French of Belleforest; and he tells me, that "all the chief incidents of the play, and all the capital characters are there in *embryo*, after a rude and barbarous manner: sentiments indeed there are none, that Shakspeare could borrow; nor any expression but *one*, which is, where Hamlet kills Polonius behind the arras: in doing which he is made to cry out as in the play, "*a rat, a rat!*"—So much for *Saxo Grammaticus!*

It is scarcely conceivable, how industriously the puritanical zeal of the last age exerted itself in destroying, amongst better things, the innocent amusements of the former. Numberless *Tales* and *Poems* are alluded to in old books, which are now perhaps no where to be found. Mr. Capell informs me, (and he is in these matters, the most able of all men to give information,) that our author appears to have been beholden to some novels, which he hath yet only seen in French or Italian: but he adds, "to say they are not in some English dress, prosaic or metrical, and perhaps with circumstances nearer to his stories, is what I will not take upon me to do: nor indeed is what I believe; but rather the contrary, and that time and accident will bring some of them to light, if not all."—

W. Painter, at the conclusion of the second *Tom*e of his *Palace of Pleasure*, 1567. *advertises* the reader, "bicause sodaynly (contrary to expectation) this volume is risen to a greater heape of leaues, I doe omit for this present time *sundry nouels* of mery

denise, referuig the same to be joyned with the rest of an other part, wherein shall succeede the remnant of *Bandello*, specially futch (suffrable) as the learned French man *François de Belleforest* hath selected, and the choysest done in the Italian. Some also out of *Erizzo*, *Ser Giouanni Florentino*, *Parabosco*, *Cynthio*, *Straparole*, *Sanfouino*, and the best liked out of the Queene of *Navarre*, and other authors. Take these in good part, with those that haue and shall come forth.”—But I am not able to find that a *third Tome* was ever published: and it is very probable, that the interest of his booksellers, and more especially the prevailing mode of the time, might lead him afterward to print his *sundry novels* separately. If this were the case, it is no wonder, that such *fugitive pieces* are recovered with difficulty; when the *two Tomes*, which *Tom. Rawlinson* would have called *justa volumina*, are almost annihilated. *Mr. Ames*, who searched after books of this sort with the utmost avidity, most certainly had not seen them, when he published his *Typographical Antiquities*; as appears from his blunders about them: and possibly I myself might have remained in the same predicament, had I not been favoured with a copy by my generous friend, *Mr. Lort*.

Mr. Colman, in the Preface to his elegant translation of *Terence*, hath offered some arguments for the learning of *Shakspeare*, which have been retailed with much confidence, since the appearance of *Mr. Johnson's* edition.

“ Besides the resemblance of particular passages scattered up and down in different plays, it is well known, that the *Comedy of Errors* is in great

measure founded on the *Menæchmi* of Plautus; but I do not recollect ever to have seen it observed, that the disguise of the *Pedant* in *The Taming of the Shrew*, and his assuming the name and character of *Vincentio*, seem to be evidently taken from the disguise of the *Sycophanta* in the *Trinummus* of the said author;⁸ and there is a quotation from the

⁸ This observation of Mr. Colman is quoted by his very ingenious colleague, Mr. Thornton, in his translation of this play: who further remarks, in another part of it, that a passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, where Shakspeare speaks of the contradiction in the nature of love, is very much in the manner of his author:

“ Amor — mores hominum moros & morosos efficit.

“ Minus placet quod suadet, quod dissuadet placet.

“ Quom inopia' est, cupias, quando ejus copia' est, tum non velis.” &c.

Which he translates with ease and elegance,

“ ————— Love makes a man a fool,

“ Hard to be pleas'd. — What you'd persuade him to,

“ He likes not, and embraces that, from which

“ You would dissuade him. — What there is a lack of,

“ That will he covet; — when 'tis in his power,

“ He'll none on't. — ” Act. III. sc. iii.

Let us now turn to the passage in Shakspeare:

“ — O brawling love! O loving hate! —

“ O heavy lightness! serious vanity!

“ Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!

“ Feather of lead, brightsmoke, cold fire, sick health!

“ Still-waking sleep! that is not what it is!”

Shakspeare, I am sure, in the opinion of Mr. Thornton, did not want a Plautus to teach him the workings of nature; nor are his *parallelisms* produced with any such implication: but, I suppose, a peculiarity appears here in the manner of expression, which however was extremely the humour of the age. Every *sonneteer* characterises love by contrarieties. Watson begins one of his *canzonets*,

“ Love is a sowre delight, a sugred grieve,

“ A living death, an euer-dying life,” &c.

Eunuch of Terence also, so familiarly introduced into the dialogue of *The Taming of the Shrew*, that I think it puts the question of Shakspeare's having read the Roman comick poets in the *original* language out of all doubt,

' Redime te captum, quam queas, minimo."

With respect to *resemblances*, I shall not trouble you any further. — That the *Comedy of Errors* is founded on the *Menæchmi*, it is notorious: nor is it less so, that a translation of it by W. W. perhaps William Warner, the author of *Albion's England*,

Turberville makes *Reason* harangue against it in the same manner:

" A fierie frost, a flame that frozen is with life !

" A heavie burden light to beare ! a vertue fraught with vice ! " &c.

Immediately from *The Romaunt of the Rose*:

" Loue it is an hatefull pees

" A free acquitaunce without reles —

" An heavie burthen light to beare

" A wicked wawe awaie to weare:

" And health full of maladie

" And charitie full of envie —

" A laughter that is weping aie

" Rest that trauaileth night and daie," &c.

This kind of *antithesis* was very much the taste of the Provençal and Italian Poets; perhaps it might be hinted by the *Ode of Sappho*, preserved by Longinus: Petrarch is full of it:

" Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra,

" E temo, e spero, ed ardo, e son un ghiaccio,

" E volo sopra'l cielo, e giaccio in terra,

" E nulla stringo, e tutto'l mondo abbraccio." &c.

Sonetto 105.

Sir Thomas Wyat gives a translation of this sonnet, without any notice of the *original*, under the title of "Description of the contrarious passions in a Lover," amongst the *Songes and Sonettes*, by the Earle of Surrey, and Others, 1574.

was extant in the time of Shakspeare;⁹ though Mr. Upton, and some other advocates for his learning, have cautiously dropt the mention of it. Besides this, (if indeed it were different,) in the *Gesta Grayorum*, the Christmas Revels of the Grays-Inn Gentlemen, 1594, "a *Comedy of Errors* like to Plautus his *Menæchmus* was played by the Players." And the same hath been suspected to be the subject of the goodlie *Comedy of Plautus*, acted at Greenwich before the King and Queen in 1520; as we learn from Hall and Holinshed:—Riccoboni highly compliments the English on opening their stage so well; but unfortunately, Cavendish in his *Life of Wolsey*, calls it, an *excellent Interlude in Latine*. About the same time it was exhibited in German at Nuremburgh, by the celebrated *Hans Sachs*, the *shoemaker*.

"But a character in *The Taming of the Shrew* is borrowed from the *Trinummus*, and no translation of that was extant."

Mr. Colman indeed hath been better employed: but if he had met with an old comedy, called *Supposes*, translated from Ariosto by George Gascoigne;² he certainly would not have appealed to

⁹ It was published in 4to. 1595. The printer of Langbaine, p. 524, hath accidentally given the date, 1515. which hath been copied implicitly by Gildon, Theobald, Cooke, and several others. Warner is now almost forgotten, yet the old criticks esteemed him one of "our chiefe heroical makers."—*Meres* informs us, that he had "heard him termed of the best wits of both our Universities, our *English Homer*,"

² His works were first collected under the singular title of "A hundredth sundrie Flowres bounde up in one small Poësie. Gathered partly (by translation) in the fyne outlandish gardins of *Euripides*, *Ouid*, *Petrarke*, *Ariosto*, and others:

Plautus. Thence Shakspeare borrowed this part of the plot, (as well as some of the phraseology,) though Theobald pronounces it his own invention: there likewise he found the quaint name of *Petruchio*. My young master and his man exchange habits and characters, and persuade a Scenæse, as he is called, to personate the *father*, exactly as in the *Taming of the Shrew*, by the pretended danger of his coming from Sienna to Ferrara, contrary to the order of the government.

Still, Shakspeare quotes a line from the *Eunuch* of Terence: by memory too, and what is more, "purposely alters it, in order to bring the sense within the compass of one line."——This remark was previous to Mr. Johnson's; or indisputably it would not have been made at all. —— "Our author had this line from Lilly; which I mention that it may not be brought as an argument of his learning."

"But how," cries an unprovoked antagonist, "can you take upon you to say, that he had it from Lilly, and not from Terence?"³ I will answer for Mr. Johnson, who is above answering for himself. — Because it is quoted as it appears in the *grammarian*, and not as it appears in the *poet*. — And thus we have done with the *purposed* alteration. Udall likewise in his *Floures for Latin speaking*,

and partly by inuention, out of our own fruitefull orchardes in Englande: yelding fundrie sweet sauors of tragical, comical, and morall discourses, bothe pleasaunt and profitable to the well smellyng noses of learned readers." *Black letter*, 4to. no date.

³ W. Kenrick's Review of Dr. Johnson's edit. of Shakspeare, 1765. 8vo. p. 105.

gathered out of Terence, 1560, reduces the passage to a single line, and subjoins a translation.

We have hitherto supposed Shakspeare the author of the *Taming of the Shrew*, but his property in it is extremely disputable. I will give you my opinion, and the reasons on which it is founded. I suppose then the present play not *originally* the work of Shakspeare, but restored by him to the stage, with the whole Induction of the Tinker, and some other occasional improvements; especially in the character of Petruchio. It is very obvious, that the *induction* and the *play* were either the works of different hands, or written at a great interval of time: the former is in our author's *best* manner, and the greater part of the *latter* in his *worst*, or even below it. Dr. Warburton declares it to be *certainly* spurious: and without doubt, *supposing* it to have been written by Shakspeare, it must have been one of his *earliest* productions; yet it is not mentioned in the list of his works by Meres in 1598.

I have met with a facetious piece of Sir John Harrington, printed in 1596, (and possibly there may be an earlier edition,) called, *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, where I suspect an allusion to the old play: "Reade the *booke* of *Taming a Shrew*, which hath made a number of us so perfect, that *now* every one can rule a shrew in our countrey, save he that hath hir." — I am aware, a *modern* linguist may object, that the word *book* does not at present seem *dramatick*, but it was once almost *technically* so: Goffson, in his *Schoole of Abuse*, "contayning a pleasaunt inuective against *Poets, Pipers, Players, Jesters*, and such like *Caterpillars* of a common-wealth," 1579. mentions "twoo prose *bookes* plaied at the Bel-

sausage;" and Hearne tells us in a note at the end of *William of Worcester*, that he had seen "a MS. in the nature of a play or interlude, intituled, *The Booke of Sir Thomas Moore*."⁴

And in fact, there is such an old *anonymous* play in Mr. Pope's list. "A pleasant conceited History,

⁴ I know indeed, there is extant a very old poem, in *black letter*, to which it might have been supposed Sir John Harrington alluded, had he not spoken of the discovery as a *new* one, and recommended it as worthy the notice of his countrymen: I am persuaded the method in the old bard will not be thought *either*. At the end of the sixth volume of *Leland's Itinerary*, we are favoured by Mr. Hearne with a Macaronick poem on a battle at Oxford between the scholars and the townsmen: on a line of which,

"Invadunt aulas *bycheson cum forth geminantes*," our commentator very wisely and gravely remarks: "*Bycheson*, id est, *son* of a *byche*, ut e codice Rawlinsoniano edidi. Eo nempe modo quo & olim *whorson* dixerunt pro *son* of a *whore*. Exempla habemus cum alibi tum in libello quodam lepido & antiquo (inter codices Seldenianos in Bibl. Bodl.) qui inscribitur: *The Wife lapped in Morel's Skyn: or the Taming of a Shrew*. Ubi pag. 36, sic legimus:

"They wrestled togyther thus they two

"So long that the clothes asunder went.

"And to the ground he threwe her tho,

"That cleane from the backe her smock he rent.

"In every hand a rod he gate,

"And layd upon her a right good pace:

"Asking of her what game was that,

"And she cried out, *Horeson*, alas, alas."

Et pag. 42.

"Come downe now in this feller so deepe,

"And morels skin there shall you see:

"With many a rod that hath made me to weepe,

"When the blood ranne downe fast by my knee.

"The mother this beheld, and cryed out, alas:

"And ran out of the feller as she had been wood.

"She came to the table where the company was,

"And sayd out, *horeson*, I will see thy harte blood."

called, *The Taming of a Shrew* — sundry times acted by the Earl of Pembroke his Servants." Which seems to have been republished by the remains of that company in 1607. when Shakspeare's copy appeared at the Black-Friars or the Globe. — Nor let this seem derogatory from the character of our poet. There is no reason to believe, that he wanted to claim the play as his own ; it was not even printed till some years after his death : but he merely revived it on his stage as a *manager*. — Ravenscroft assures us, that this was really the case with *Titus Andronicus* ; which, it may be observed, hath not Shakspeare's name on the title-page of the only edition published in his life-time. Indeed, from every internal mark, I have not the least doubt but this *horrible* piece was originally written by the author of the *lines* thrown into the mouth of the *player* in *Hamlet*, and of the tragedy of *Lochrine* : which likewise from some assistance perhaps given to his friend, hath been unjustly and ignorantly charged upon Shakspeare.

But the *sheet-anchor* holds fast : Shakspeare himself hath left some translations from Ovid. "The Epistles," says one, "of Paris and Helen, give a sufficient proof of his acquaintance with *that* poet:" "And it may be concluded," says another, "that he was a competent judge of *other* authors, who wrote in the same language."

This hath been the universal cry, from Mr. Pope himself to the criticks of yesterday. Possibly, however, the gentlemen will hesitate a moment, if we tell them, that Shakspeare was *not* the author of these translations. Let them turn to a forgotten book, by Thomas Heywood, called, *Britaines Troy*, printed by W. Jaggard in 1609. fol. and they will

find these identical Epistles, "which being so pertinent to our historie," says Heywood, "I thought necessarie to translate."—How then came they ascribed to Shakspeare? We will tell them that likewise. The same voluminous writer published an *Apology for Actors*, 4to. 1612. and in an Appendix directed to his new printer, Nic. Okes, he accuses his old one, Jaggard, of "taking the two *Epistles of Paris to Helen* and *Helen to Paris*, and printing them in a less volume, and under the name of *another* : — but he was much offended with Master Jaggard, that altogether unknowne to him, he had presumed to make so bold with his name." In the same work of Heywood are all the other translations, which have been printed in the modern editions of the poems of Shakspeare.

You now hope for land: We have seen through little matters, but what must be done with a whole book?—In 1751, was reprinted, "A compendious or brieft Examination of certayne ordinary Complaints of diuers of our Countrymen in these our Days: which although they are in some Parte unjust and friuolous, yet are they all by way of Dialogue thoroughly debated and discussed by William Shakspeare, Gentleman." 8vo.

This extraordinary piece was originally published

It may seem little matter of wonder, that the name of Shakspeare should be borrowed for the benefit of the book-seller; and by the way, as probably for a *play* as a *poem*: but modern criticks may be surpris'd perhaps at the complaint of John Hall, that "certayne chapters of the *Proverbes*, translated by him into English metre, 1550, had before been untruely entituled to be the doyngs of Mayster Thomas Sternhold."

in 4to. 1581. and dedicated by the author, "To the most vertuous and learned lady, his most deare and soveraigne princeesse, Elizabeth; being inforced by her Majesties late and singular clemency in pardoning certayne his unduetifull misdemeanour." And by the modern editors, to the late King; as "a treatise composed by the most extensive and fertile genius, that ever any age or nation produced."

Here we join issue with the writers of that excellent though very unequal work, the *Biographia Britannica*:⁶ "If," say they, "this piece could be writ-

⁶ I must however correct a remark in the *Life of Spenser*, which is impotently levelled at the first criticks of the age. It is observed from the correspondence of Spenser and Gabriel Harvey, that the plan of *The Fairy Queen*, was laid, and part of it executed in 1580, three years before the *Gierusalemme Liberata* was printed: "hence appears the impertinence of all the apologies for his choice of *Ariosto's* manner in preference of *Tasso's*!"

But the fact is not true with respect to Tasso. Manfo and Nicéron inform us, that his poem was published, though imperfectly, in 1574; and I myself can assure the biographer, that I have met with at least *six* other editions, preceding his date for its first publication. I suspect, that Baillet is accountable for this mistake: who in the *Jugemens des Sçavans*, Tom. III. p. 399, mentions no edition previous to the quarto, Venice, 1583.

It is a question of long standing, whether a part of *The Fairy Queen* hath been *lost*, or whether the work was left *unfinished*: which may effectually be answered by a single quotation. William Browne published some Poems in fol. 1616. under the name of *Britannia's Pastorals*, "esteemed then," says Wood, "to be written in a sublime strain, and for subject *amorous* and *very pleasing*." — In one of which, Book II. Song 1. he thus speaks of Spenser:

"He sung th' heroicke knights of faery land
 "In lines so elegant, of such command,
 "That had the Thracian plaid but halfe so well,
 "He had not left Eurydice in hell.

ten by our poet, it would be absolutely decisive in the dispute about his learning; for many quotations appear in it from the Greek and Latin classics."

The concurring circumstances of the *name*, and the *misdemeanour*, which is supposed to be the old story of *deer-stealing*, seem fairly to challenge our poet for the author: but they hesitate. — His claim may appear to be confuted by the date 1581. when Shakspeare was only *seventeen*, and the *long* experience, which the writer talks of. — But I will not keep you in suspense: the book was *not* written by Shakspeare.

Styrpe, in his *Annals*, calls the author *SOME learned man*, and this gave me the first suspicion. I knew very well, that honest John (to use the language of Sir Thomas Bodley) did not waste his time with such *baggage books* as *plays* and *poems*; yet I must suppose, that he had heard of the name of Shakspeare. After a while I met with the original edition. Here in the title-page, and at the end of the dedication, appear only the initials, W. S. Gent. and presently I was informed by Anthony Wood,

“ But e’re he ended his melodious song,
 “ An host of *angels* flew the clouds among,
 “ And rapt this swan from his attentive mates,
 “ To make him one of their associates
 “ In heavens faire quire: where now he sings the praise
 “ Of him that is the *first and last of daies*.”

It appears, that Browne was intimate with Drayton, Jonson, and Selden, by their poems prefixed to his book: he had therefore good opportunities of being acquainted with the fact abovementioned. Many of his poems remain in MS. We have in our library at Emmanuel a masque of his, presented at the Inner Temple, Jan. 13, 1614. The subject is the story of Ulysses and Circe.

that the book in question was written, not by William Shakspeare, but by William Stafford, Gentleman:⁷ which at once accounted for the *misde-meanour* in the dedication. For Stafford had been concerned at that time, and was indeed afterward, as Camden and the other annalists inform us, with some of the conspirators against Elizabeth; which he properly calls his *unductifull* behaviour.

I hope by this time, that any one open to conviction may be nearly satisfied; and I will promise to give you on this head very little more trouble.

The justly celebrated Mr. Warton hath favoured us, in his *Life of Dr. Bathurst*, with some *hearsay* particulars concerning Shakspeare from the papers of Aubrey, which had been in the hands of Wood; and I ought not to suppress them, as the *last* seems to make against my doctrine. They came originally, I find, on consulting the MS. from one Mr. Beeston: and I am sure Mr. Warton, whom I have the honour to call my friend, and an associate in the question, will be in no pain about their credit.

“ William Shakspeare’s father was a butcher, — while he was a boy he exercised his father’s trade, but when he killed a calf, he would do it in a high style, and make a speech. This William being inclined *naturally* to poetry and acting, came to London, I guess, about *eighteen*, and was an actor in one of the playhouses, and did act *exceedingly well*. He began *early* to make essays in dramatique

⁷ *Faſti*, 2d edit. v. 1. 208. — It will be seen on turning to the former edition, that the latter part of the paragraph belongs to another Stafford. — I have since observed, that Wood is not the first, who hath given us the true author of the pamphlet.

poetry. — The humour of the Constable in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* he happened to take at Crendon⁸ in Bucks. — I think, I have been told, that he left near three hundred pounds to a *sister*. — *He understood Latin pretty well, FOR he had been in his younger yeares a schoolmaster in the country.*"

I will be short in my animadversions; and take them in their order.

The account of the *trade* of the family is not only contrary to all other tradition, but, as it may seem, to the instrument from the Herald's Office, so frequently reprinted. — Shakspeare most certainly went to London, and commenced actor through necessity, not natural inclination. — Nor have we any reason to suppose, that he did act *exceeding well*. Rowe tells us, from the information of Betterton, who was inquisitive into this point, and had very early opportunities of inquiry from Sir W. D'Avenant, that he was no *extraordinary actor*; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. Yet this *chef d'oeuvre* did not please: I will give you an original stroke at it. Dr. Lodge, who was for ever pestering the town with pamphlets, published in the year 1596, *Wits Miserie, and the Worlds Madnesse, discovering the Devils incarnat of this Age*, 4to. One of these devils is *Hate-virtue, or Sorrow for another man's*

⁸ It was observed in the former edition, that this place is not met with in *Spelman's Villare*, or in *Adams's Index*; nor, it might have been added, in the *first* and the *last* performance of this sort, *Speed's Tables*, and *Whatley's Gazetteer*: perhaps, however, it may be meant under the name of *Crandon*; — but the inquiry is of no importance. — It should, I think, be written *Credendon*; though better antiquaries than Aubrey have acquiesced in the vulgar corruption.

good successe, who, says the Doctor, is “*a foule lubber, and looks as pale as the visard of the Ghost, which cried so miserably at the theatre, like an oyster-wife, Hamlet revenge.*”⁹ Thus you see Mr. Holt’s supposed *proof*, in the Appendix to the late edition, that *Hamlet* was written after 1597, or perhaps 1602, will by no means hold good; whatever might be the case of the particular passage on which it is founded.

Nor does it appear, that Shakspeare did begin early to make *essays in dramatick poetry*: *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, which hath so often been ascribed to him on the credit of Kirkman and Winstanley,² was written by George Peele; and

⁹ To this observation of Dr. Farmer it may be added, that the play of *Hamlet* was better known by this scene, than by any other. In Decker’s *Satiromastix*, 1602, the following passage occurs :

Asinius.

“ Would I were hang’d if I can call you any names but captain, and *Tucca*.”

Tucca.

“ No, fye; my name’s *Hamlet Revenge*: thou hast been at Paris-Garden, hast thou not?”

Again, in *Westward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607.

“ Let these husbands play *mad Hamlet*, and cry, *revenge!*”

STEEVENS.

Dr. Farmer’s observation may be further confirmed by the following passage in an anonymous play, called *A Warning for faire Women*, 1599. We also learn from it the usual dress of the stage ghosts of that time :

“ — A filthie whining ghost,

“ Lapt in some foule sheet, or a *leather pilch*,

“ Comes screaming like a pigge half stickt,

“ And cries *vindicta — revenge, revenge.*”

The leathern pilch, I suppose, was a theatrical substitute for armour. MALONE.

² These people, who were the *Curls* of the last age, ascribe

Shakspeare is not met with, even as an *assistant*, till at least seven years afterward.³—Nash, in his *Epistle to the Gentlemen Students of both Universities*, prefixed to Greene's *Arcadia*, 4to. *black letter*, recommends his friend, Peele, “as the chiefe supporter of pleasance now living, the Atlas of poetrie, and *primus verborum artifex*: whose first increase, *The Arraignment of Paris*, might plead to their opinions his pregnant dexteritie of wit, and manifold varietie of inuention.”⁴

likewise to our author, those miserable performances, *Mucidorus*, and *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*.

³ Mr. Pope asserts, “The troublesome Raigne of *King John*,” in two parts, 1611, to have been written by Shakspeare and Rowley:—which edition is a mere copy of another in *black letter*, 1591. But I find his assertion is somewhat to be doubted: for the old edition hath no name of *author* at all; and that of 1611. the initials only, *W. Sh.* in the title-page.*

⁴ Peele seems to have been taken into the patronage of the Earl of Northumberland about 1593. to whom he dedicates in that year, “*The Honour of the Garter*, a poem gratulatorie—the *firstling* consecrated to his noble name.”—“He was esteemed, says Anthony Wood, “a most noted poet, 1579. but when or where he died, I cannot tell, for so it is, and always *hath been*, that most POETS die *poor*, and consequently obscurely, and a hard matter it is to trace them to their graves. *Claruit* 1599.” *Ath. Oxon.* Vol. I. p. 300.

We had lately in a periodical pamphlet, called, *The Theatrical Review*, a very curious letter under the name of George Peele, to one Master Henrie Marle; relative to a dispute between Shakspeare and Alleyn, which was compromised by Ben Jonson.—“I never longed for thy companie more than last night; we were all verie merrie at the Globe, when Ned Alleyn did not scruple to asseyrme pleasauntly to thy friende Will, that he had stolen hys speeche about the excellencie

* See the *Essay on the Order of Shakspeare's Plays*, Article, *King John*.
MALONE,

In the next place, unfortunately, there is neither such a character as a *Constable* in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*: nor was the *three hundred pounds* legacy to a *sister*, but a *daughter*.

And to close the whole, it is not possible, according to Aubrey himself, that Shakspeare could have been some years a *schoolmaster in the country*, on which circumstance only the supposition of his learning is professedly founded. He was not surely *very* young, when he was employed to *kill calves*, and commenced player about *eighteen*!—The truth is, that he left his father, for a wife, a year sooner; and had at least two children born at Stratford before he retired from thence to London. It is therefore sufficiently clear, that poor Anthony had too much reason for his character of Aubrey. You will find it in his own account of his life, published by Hearne, which I would earnestly recommend to any hypochondriack:

“A pretender to antiquities, roving, magotie-headed, and sometimes little better than crazed; and being exceedingly credulous, would stuff his many letters sent to A. W. with *folly* and misinformations.” P. 577.

of acting in *Hamlet* hys tragedye, from conversaytions manifold, whych had passed between them, and opinions gyven by Alleyn touching that subject. Shakspeare did not take this task in good sorte; but Jonson did put an end to the stryfe wyth wittielie saying, thys affaire needeth no contention: you stole it from Ned no doubt: do not marvel: haue you not seene hym acte tymes out of number?” — This is pretended to be printed from the original MS. dated 1600; which agrees well enough with Wood's *Claruit*: but unluckily, Peele was dead at least two years before. “As Anacreon died by the *pot*, says Meres, so George Peele by the *poet*.” *Wit's Treasury*, 1598. p. 286.

Thus much for the learning of Shakspeare with respect to the ancient languages: indulge me with an observation or two on the supposed knowledge of the modern ones, and I will promise to release you.

"It is *evident*," we have been told, "that he was not unacquainted with the Italian:" but let us inquire into the *evidence*.

Certainly some Italian words and phrases appear in the works of Shakspeare; yet if we had nothing else to observe, their orthography might lead us to suspect them to be not of the writer's importation. But we can go further, and prove this.

When Pistol "cheers up himself with ends of verse," he is only a copy of Hanniball Gonsaga, who ranted on yielding himself a prisoner to an English captain in the Low Countries, as you may read in an old collection of tales, called *Wits, Fits, and Fancies*,¹

"Si fortuna me tormenta,
"Il speranza me contenta."

And Sir Richard Hawkins, in his voyage to the South-Sea, 1593, throws out the same jingling distich on the loss of his pinnace.

"Master Page, fit; good Master Page, fit; *Proface*. What you want in meat, we'll have in drink," says Justice Shallow's *fac totum*, Davy, in the Second Part of *Henry IV*.

¹ By one Anthony Copley, 4to. black letter, it seems to have had many editions: perhaps the last was in 1614. — The first piece of this sort, that I have met with, was printed by T. Berthelet, though not mentioned by Ames, called, "Tales, and quicke answeres very mery and pleasant to rede." 4to. no date.

Proface, Sir Thomas Hanmer observes to be Italian, from *profaccia*, *much good may it do you*. Mr. Johnson rather thinks it a mistake for *perforce*. Sir Thomas however is right; yet it is no argument for his author's Italian knowledge.

Old Heywood, the epigrammatist, addressed his readers long before,

“ Readers, reade this thus: for preface, *proface*,
 “ Much good do it you, the poore repast here,” &c.
Woorkes, Lond. 4to. 1562.

And Dekker in his play, *If it be not good, the Diuel is in it*, (which is certainly true, for it is full of devils,) makes Shackle-soule, in the character of Friar Rush, tempt his brethren with “ choice of dishes,”

“ To which *proface*; with blythe lookes sit yee.”

Nor hath it escaped the quibbling manner of the *Water-poet*, in the title of a poem prefixed to his *Praise of Hempseed*: “ A Preamble, Preatrot, Preagatlop, Preapace, or Preface; and *Proface*, my Masters, if your Stomacks serve.”

But the editors are not contented without coining Italian. “ *Rivo*, *says the drunkard*,” is an expression of the *madcap* Prince of Wales; which Sir Thomas Hanmer corrects to *Ribi*, *drink away*, or *again*, as it should be rather translated. Dr. Warburton accedes to this; and Mr. Johnson hath admitted it into his text; but with an observation, that *Rivo* might possibly be the cant of English taverns. And so indeed it was: it occurs frequently in Marston. Take a quotation from his comedy of *What you will*, 1607.

“ Musicke, tobacco, sacke, and sleepe,
 “ The tide of sorrow backward keep :
 “ If thou art sad at others fate,
 “ *Rivo*, drink deep, give care the mate.”

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Boyet calls Don Armado,

“ — A Spaniard that keeps here in court,
 “ A phantasmè, a *monarcho*. — ”

Here too Sir Thomas is willing to palm Italian upon us. We should read, it seems, *mammuccio*, a mammet, or puppet: Ital. *Mammuccia*. But the allusion is to a fantastical *character* of the time. — “ Popular applause,” says Meres, “ dooth nourish some, neither do they gape after any other thing, but vaine praise and glorie, — as in our age Peter Shakerlye of Paules, and MONARCHO that liued about the court.” P. 178.

I fancy, you will be satisfied with one more instance.

“ *Baccare*, You are marvellous forward,” quoth Gremio to Petruchio in the *Taming of a Shrew*.

“ But not so forward,” says Mr. Theobald, “ as our editors are *indolent*. This is a stupid corruption of the press, that none of them have dived into. We must read *Baccalare*, as Mr. Warburton acutely observed to me, by which the Italians mean, Thou ignorant, presumptuous man.” — “ Properly, indeed,” adds Mr. Heath, “ a *graduated* scholar, but ironically and sarcastically, a *pretender* to scholarship.”

This is admitted by the editors and criticks of every denomination. Yet the word is neither wrong, nor Italian: it was an old proverbial one, used

quently by John Heywood; who hath made, what he pleases to call, *epigrams* upon it.

Take two of them, such as they are:

“ *Backare*, quoth Mortimer to his sōw :

“ Went that sōw *backe* at that bidding trowe you?”

“ *Backare*, quoth Mortimer to his sōw : se

“ Mortimers sōw speakth as good *latin* as he.”

Howel takes this from Heywood, in his *Old Sawes and Adages*: and Philpot introduces it into the Proverbs collected by Camden.

We have but few observations concerning Shakspeare's knowledge of the Spanish tongue. Dr. Grey indeed is willing to suppose, that the plot of *Romeo and Juliet* may be borrowed from a COMEDY of Lopes de Vega. But the Spaniard, who was certainly acquainted with Bandello, hath not only changed the catastrophe, but the names of the characters. Neither Romeo nor Juliet; neither Montague nor Capulet, appears in this performance: and how came they to the knowledge of Shakspeare? — Nothing is more certain, than that he chiefly followed the translation by Painter, from the French of Boisteau, and hence arise the deviations from Bandello's original Italian.⁶ It seems,

⁶ It is remarked, that “Paris, though in one place called *earl*, is most commonly stiled the *countie* in this play. Shakspeare seems to have preferred, for some reason or other, the Italian *conte* to our *count*: — perhaps he took it from the old English novel, from which he is said to have taken his plot.” — He certainly did so: Paris is there first stiled a *young earle*, and afterward, *counte*, *countee*, and *county*; according to the unsettled orthography of the time.

The word however is frequently met with in other writers; particularly in Fairfax:

however, from a passage in Ames's *Typographical Antiquities*, that Painter was not the only translator of this popular story: and it is possible therefore, that Shakspeare might have other assistance.

In the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, the Tinker attempts to talk Spanish: and consequently the author himself was acquainted with it.

"*Paucus pallabris*, let the world slide, *seffa*."

But this is a burlesque on *Hieronymo*; the piece of bombast, that I have mentioned to you before:

"What new device have they devised, trow?"

"*Pocas pallabras*," &c. —

Mr. Whalley tells us, the author of this piece hath the happiness to be at this time unknown, the remembrance of him having perished with himself; Philips and others ascribe it to one William Smith: but I take this opportunity of informing him, that it was written by Thomas Kyd; if he will accept the authority of his contemporary, Heywood.

More hath been said concerning Shakspeare's

"As when a captaine doth besiege some hold,

"Set in a marish or high on a hill,

"And trieth waies and wiles a thousand fold,

"To bring the piece subjected to his will;

"So far'd the countie with the pagan bold." &c.

Godfrey of Bulloigne, Book VII. st. 90.

"Fairfax," says Mr. Hume, hath translated Tasso with an elegance and ease, and at the same time with an exactness, which for that age are surprising. Each line in the original is faithfully rendered by a correspondent line in the translation." The former part of this character is extremely true; but the latter not quite so. In the book above quoted Tasso and Fairfax do not even agree in the number of *stanzas*.

acquaintance with the French language. In the play of *Henry V.* we have a whole scene in it, and in other places it occurs familiarly in the dialogue.

We may observe in general, that the early editions have not half the quantity; and every sentence, or rather every word most ridiculously blundered. These, for several reasons, could not possibly be published by the author; ⁷ and it is

⁷ Every writer on Shakspeare hath expressed his astonishment, that his author was not solicitous to secure his fame by a correct edition of his performances. This matter is not understood. When a poet was connected with a particular playhouse, he constantly sold his works to the *Company*, and it was their interest to keep them from a number of rivals. A favourite piece, as Heywood informs us, only got into print, when it was copied *by the ear*, "for a double sale would bring on a suspicion of honesty." Shakspeare therefore himself published nothing in the drama: when he left the stage, his copies remained with his fellow-managers, Heminge and Condell; who at their own retirement, about seven years after the death of their author, gave the world the edition now known by the name of the *first folio*; and call the previous publications "stolne and surreptitious, maimed and deformed by the frauds and stealths of injurious impostors." But *this* was printed from the playhouse copies; which in a series of years had been frequently altered, through convenience, caprice, or ignorance. We have a sufficient instance of the liberties taken by the actors, in an old pamphlet by Nash, called *Lenten Stuffe, with the Prayse of the red Herring*, 4to. 1599. where he assures us, that in a play of his, called *The Isle of Dogs*, "four acts, without his consent, or the least guesse of his drift or scope, were supplied by the players."

This however was not his first quarrel with them. In the Epistle prefixed to *Greene's Arcadia*, which I have quoted before, Tom. hath a lash at some "vaine glorious tragedians," and very plainly at Shakspeare in particular; which will serve for an answer to an observation of Mr. Pope, that had almost been forgotten: "It was thought a praise to Shakspeare, that he scarce ever blotted a line: — I believe the

extremely probable, that the French ribaldry was at first inserted by a different hand, as the many additions most certainly were after he had left the stage. — Indeed, every friend to his memory will not easily believe, that he was acquainted with the scene between Catharine and the old gentlewoman; or surely he would not have admitted such obscenity and nonsense.

Mr. Hawkins, in the Appendix to Mr. Johnson's

common opinion of his want of learning proceeded from no better ground. This too might be thought a *praise* by some." — But hear Nash, who was far from *praising*: "I leaue all these to the mercy of their mother-tongue, that feed on nought but the crums that fall from the *translator's* trencher. — That could scarcely *Latinize* their neck verse if they should haue neede, yet *English Seneca* read by candlelight yeelds many good sentences — hee will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, *handfuls* of tragicall *speeches*." — I cannot determine exactly when this *Epistle* was first published; but, I fancy, it will carry the original *Hamlet* somewhat further back than we have hitherto done: and it may be observed, that the oldest copy now extant is said to be "enlarged to almost as much againe as it was." Gabriel Harvey printed at the end of the year 1592. *Four Letters and certaine Sonnetts, especially touching Robert Greene*: in one of which his *Arcadia* is mentioned. Now Nash's *Epistle* must have been previous to these, as Gabriel is quoted in it with applause; and the *Four Letters* were the beginning of a quarrel. Nash replied, in *Strange newes of the intercepting certaine Letters, and a Convoy of Verses, as they were going privilie to victual the Low Countries*, 1593. Harvey rejoined the same year in *Pierce's Supererogation, or a new praise of the old Asse*." And Nash again, in *Have with you to Saffron Walden, or Gabriell Harvey's Hunt is up; containing a full answer to the eldest Sonne of the halter-maker*, 1596.

Dr. Lodge calls Nash our true *English Aretine*: and John Taylor in his *Kicksey Winsay, or a Lerry Come-twang*, even makes an oath "by sweet satyricke Nash his *name*." — He died before 1596. as appears from an old comedy, called *The Return from Parnassus*.

edition, hath an ingenious observation to prove, that Shakspeare, supposing the French to be his, had very little knowledge of the language.

“ Est-il impossible d’eschapper la force de ton bras ? ” says a Frenchman. — “ *Bras*, cur ? ” replies Pistol.

“ Almost any one knows, that the French word *bras* is pronounced *brau* ; and what resemblance of sound does this bear to *brass* ? ”

Mr. Johnson makes a doubt, whether the pronunciation of the French language may not be changed, since Shakspeare’s time, “ if not,” says he, “ it may be suspected that some other man wrote the French scenes : ” but this does not appear to be the case, at least in this termination, from the rules of the grammarians, or the practice of the poets. I am certain of the former from the *French Alphabeth* of De la Mothe, ⁸ and the *Orthoeptia Gallica* of John Eliot ; ⁹ and of the latter from the rhymes of Marot, Ronfard, and Du Bartas. — Connections of this kind were very common. Shakspeare himself assisted Ben Jonson in his *Sejanus*, as it was originally written ; and Fletcher in his *Two Noble Kinsmen*.

But what if the French scene were occasionally

⁸ Lond. 1592. 8vo.

⁹ Lond. 1593. 4to. Eliot is almost the only witty grammarian that I have had the fortune to meet with. In his Epistle prefatory to *The Gentle Doctors of Gaule*, he cries out for persecution, very like Jack in that most poignant of all satires, the *Tale of a Tub*, “ I pray you be readie quicklie to caull at my booke, I beseech you heartily calumniate my doings with speed, I request you humbly controll my method as soone as you may, I earnestly entreat you hisse at my inventions, ” &c.

introduced into every play on this subject? and perhaps there were more than one before our poets.—In *Pierce Penileffe, his Supplication to the Deuill*, 4to. 1592, (which, it seems, from the Epistle to the Printer, was not in the first edition,) the author, Nash, exclaims, “What a glorious thing it is to have *Henry the Fifth* represented on the stage leading the *French King* prisoner, and forcing both him and the *Dolphin* to swear fealty!”—And it appears from the Jestes of the famous comedian, Tarlton, 4. 1611. that he had been particularly celebrated in the part of the Clown, in *Henry the Fifth*: but no such character exists in the play of Shakspeare. *Henry the Sixth* hath ever been doubted; and a passage in the above-quoted piece of Nash may give us reason to believe, it was previous to our author. “Howe would it haue joyed braue Talbot (the terror of the French) to thinke that after he had lyen two hundred yeare in his toomb, he should triumph again on the stage; and haue his bones new embalmed with the teares of ten thousand spectators at least (at feuerall times) who in the tragedian that represents his person, imagine they behold him fresh bleeding.”—I have no doubt but *Henry the Sixth* had the same author with *Edward the Third*, which hath been recovered to the world in Mr. Capell’s *Prolusions*.

It hath been observed, that the Giant of Rabelais is sometimes alluded to by Shakspeare: and in his time no translation was extant.—But the story was in every one’s hand.

In a letter by one Laneham, or Langham, for the name is written differently,^a concerning the

^a It is indeed of no importance, but I suspect the former

entertainment at Killingworth Castle, printed 1575. we have a list of the vulgar romances of the age: "King Arthurz book, Huon of Burdeaus, Friar Rous, Howleglass, and GARGANTUA." Meres³ mentions him as equally hurtful to young minds with the *Four Sons of Aymon*, and the *Seven Champions*. And John Taylor hath him likewise in his catalogue of *authors*, prefixed to *Sir Gregory Nonsense*.⁴

to be right, as I find it corrupted afterward to *Lanam* and *Lanum*.

³ This author by a pleasant mistake in some sensible *Conjectures on Shakspeare* lately printed at Oxford, is quoted by the name of *Maister*. Perhaps the title-page was imperfect; it runs thus: "Palladis Tamia. Wits Treasury. Being the second part of Wits Commonwealth, by Francis Meres Maister of Artes of both Universities."

I am glad out of gratitude to this man, who hath been of frequent service to me, that I am enabled to perfect Wood's account of him; from the assistance of our *Master's* very accurate list of graduates, (which it would do honour to the university to print at the publick expense) and the kind information of a friend from the register of his parish: — He was originally of Pembroke-Hall, B. A. in 1587. and M. A. 1591. About 1602. he became rector of Wing in Rutland; and died there, 1646. in the 81st year of his age.

⁴ I have quoted many pieces of John Taylor, but it was impossible to give their original dates. He may be traced as an author for more than half a century. His works were collected in folio, 1630. but many were printed afterward; I will mention one for the humour of the title: "Drinke and welcome, or the famous History of the most part of Drinkes in use in Greate Britaine and Ireland; with an especial Declaration of the Potency, Vertue, and Operation of our English Ale: with a description of all sorts of Waters, from the Ocean Sea to the Tears of a Woman, 4to. 1633." In *Wits Merriment, or Lusty Drollery*, 1656. we have an "Epitaph on John Taylor, who was born in the city of Gloucester, and

But to come to a conclusion, I will give you an irrefragable argument, that Shakspeare did *not* understand *two* very common words in the French and Latin languages.

According to the articles of agreement between the conqueror Henry and the king of France, the latter was to style the former, (in the corrected French of the modern editions,) "*Nostre très cher filz Henry roy d'Angleterre*"; and in Latin, *Præclarissimus filius*," &c. "What," says Dr. Warburton, "is *très cher* in French, *præclarissimus* in Latin! we should read *præcarissimus*."—This appears to be exceedingly true; but how came the blunder? it is a typographical one in Holinshed, which Shakspeare copied; but must indisputably have corrected, had he been acquainted with the languages.—"Our said father, during his life, shall name, call, and write us in French in this maner: *Nostre très chier filz, Henry roy d'Engleterre*—and in Latine in this maner, *Præclarissimus filius noster*." Edit, 1587. p. 574.

To corroborate this instance, let me observe to you, though it be nothing further to the purpose; that another error of the same kind hath been the source of a mistake in an historical passage of our author; which hath ridiculously troubled the critics.

Richard the Third's harangues his army before the battle of Bosworth:

died in Phoenix Alley, in the 75 yeare of his age; you may find him, if the worms have not devoured him, in Covent Garden church-yard," p. 130. — He died about two years before.

Some inquiry hath been made for the first performers of the capital characters in Shakspeare.

" Remember whom ye are to cope withal,
 " A sort of vagabonds, of rascals, runaways —
 " And who doth lead them but a paltry fellow
 " Long kept in Britaine at *our mother's* cost,
 " A milkfop," &c. —

" *Our mother*," Mr. Theobald perceives to be wrong, and Henry was somewhere secreted on the *continent*: he reads therefore, and all the editors after him,

" Long kept in Bretagne at *his* mother's cost."

But give me leave to transcribe a few more lines from Holinshed, and you will find at once, that Shakspeare had been there before me: — " Ye see further, how a companie of traitors, theeves, outlaws and runnagates be aiders and partakers of his

We learn, that Burbage, the *alter Roscius* of Camden, was the original *Richard*, from a passage in the poems of Bishop Corbet; who introduces his host at Bosworth describing the battle:

" But when he would have said King Richard died,
 " And call'd a *horse*, a *horse*, he Burbage cried."

The play on this subject mentioned by Sir John Harrington in his *Apologie for Poetrie*, 1591. and sometimes mistaken for Shakspeare's, was a Latin one, and written by Dr. Legge; and acted at St. John's in our university, some years before 1588. the date of the copy in the Museum. This appears from a better MS. in our library at Emmanuel, with the names of the original performers.

It is evident from a passage in *Camden's Annals*, that there was an old play likewise on the subject of *Richard the Second*; but I know not in what language. Sir Gelley Merrick, who was concerned in the harebrained business of the Earl of Essex, and was hanged for it with the ingenious Cuffe, in 1601. is accused amongst other things, "*quod exoletam Tragœdiam de tragicâ abdicatione Regis Ricardi Secundi in publico theatro coram conjuratis datâ precuniâ agi curasset.*"

feat and enterprife. — And to begin with the erle of Richmond captaine of this rebellion, he is a Welsh milkfop — brought up by *my moather's* meanes and mine, like a captive in a close cage in the court of Francis duke of Britaine." P. 756.

Holinshed copies this *verbatim* from his brother chronicler Hall, edit. 1548. fol. 54. but his printer hath given us by accident the word *moother* instead of *brother*; as it is in the original, and ought to be in Shakspeare.⁶

I hope, my good friend, you have by this time acquitted our great poet of all piratical depredations on the ancients, and are ready to receive my *conclusion*. — He remembered perhaps enough of his *school-boy* learning to put the *Hig, hag, hog*, into the mouth of Sir Hugh Evans; and might pick up in the writers of the time,⁷ or the course of his

⁶ I cannot take my leave of Holinshed without clearing up a difficulty, which hath puzzled his biographers. Nicholson and other writers have *supposed* him a *clergyman*. Tanner goes further, and tells us, that he was educated at Cambridge, and actually took the degree of M. A. in 1544. Yet it appears by his will, printed by Hearne, that at the end of life he was only a *steward*, or a *servant* in some capacity or other, to Thomas Burdett, Esq. of Bromcote, in Warwickshire. — These things Dr. Campbell could not reconcile. The truth is, we have no claim to the education of the *Chronicler*: the M. A. in 1544. was not *Raphael*, but one *Ottiwel Holingshed*, who was afterward named by the founder one of the first Fellows of Trinity College.

⁷ Ascham in the Epistle prefixed to his *Toxophilus*, 1571. observes of them, that "Manye Englishe writers, usinge straunge wordes, as *Lattine, Frenche, and Italian*, do make all thinges darke and harde. Ones," says he, "I communed with a man which reasoned the Englishe tongue to be enriched and encreased thereby, sayinge: Who will not prayse that feast, where a man shall drincke at a dinner both wyne, ale,

conversation, a familiar phrase or two of French or Italian: but his *studies* were most demonstratively confined to *nature* and *his own language*.

In the course of this disquisition, you have often smiled at "all such reading, as was never read;" and possibly I may have indulged it too far: but it is the reading necessary for a comment on Shakspeare. Those who apply solely to the ancients for this purpose, may with equal wisdom study the TALMUD for an exposition of TRISTRAM SHANDY. Nothing but an intimate acquaintance with the writers of the time, who are frequently of no other value, can point out his allusions, and ascertain his phraseology. The reformers of his text are for ever equally positive, and equally wrong. The cant of the age, a provincial expression, an obscure proverb, an obsolete custom, a hint at a person or a fact no longer remembered, hath continually defeated the best of our *guessers*: You must not suppose me to speak at random, when I assure you, that from some forgotten book or other, I can demonstrate this to you in many hundred places; and I almost wish, that I had not been persuaded into a different employment.

Though I have as much of the *natale solum*⁸ about

and beere? Truly (quoth I) they be al good, euery one taken by himselfe alone, but if you put Malmesye, and sacke, redde wyne and white, ale and beere, and al in one pot, you shall make a drinke neither easye to be knowen, nor yet holsome for the bodye."

⁸ This alludes to an intended publication of the *Antiquities of the Town of Leicester*. The work was just begun at the press, when the writer was called to the principal tuition of a large college, and was obliged to decline the undertaking. The

me, as any man whatsoever; yet, I own, the *prim-rose path* is still more pleasing than the *Fosse* or the *Watling-Street*:

“ Age cannot wither it, nor custom stale

“ Its infinite variety. ——— ”

And when I am fairly rid of the dust of topographical antiquity, which hath continued much longer about me than I expected; you may very probably be troubled again with the ever fruitful subject of SHAKSPEARE and his COMMENTATORS.

plates, however, and some of the materials have been long ago put into the hands of a gentleman, who is every way qualified to make a proper use of them.

A P P E N D I X

T O

MR. COLMAN'S TRANSLATION OF TERENCE,

(OCTAVO EDITION.)

THE reverend and ingenious Mr. Farmer, in his curious and entertaining *Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare*, having done me the honour to animadvert on some passages in the preface to this translation, I cannot dismiss this edition without declaring how far I coincide with that gentleman; although what I then threw out carelessly on the subject of this pamphlet was merely incidental, nor did I mean to enter the lists as a champion to defend either side of the question.

It is most true, as Mr. Farmer takes for granted, that I had never met with the old comedy called *The Supposes*, nor has it ever yet fallen into my hands; yet I am willing to grant, on Mr. Farmer's authority, that Shakspeare borrowed part of the plot of *The Taming of the Shrew*, from that old translation of Ariosto's play by George Gascoign, and had no obligations to Plautus. I will accede also to the truth of Dr. Johnson's and Mr. Farmer's observation, that the line from Terence, exactly as it stands in Shakspeare, is extant in Lilly and Udall's *Floures for Latin Speaking*. Still, however, Shakspeare's total ignorance of the learned languages

remains to be proved; for it must be granted, that such books are put into the hands of those who are learning those languages, in which class we must necessarily rank Shakspeare, or he could not even have quoted Terence from Udall or Lilly; nor is it likely, that so rapid a genius should not have made some further progress. "Our author," says Dr. Johnson, as quoted by Mr. Farmer, "had this line from Lilly; which I mention, that it may not be brought as an argument of his learning." It is, however, an argument that he read Lilly; and a few pages further it seems pretty certain, that the author of *The Taming of the Shrew* had at least read Ovid; from whose Epistle we find these lines:

"Hæc ibat Simois; hic est Sigeia tellus;
"Hic steterat Priami regia celsa senis."

And what does Dr. Johnson say on this occasion? Nothing. And what does Mr. Farmer say on this occasion? Nothing.

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, which, bad as it is, is ascribed by Dr. Johnson himself to Shakspeare, there occurs the word *thraasonical*; another argument which seems to shew that he was not unacquainted with the comedies of Terence; not to mention, that the character of the schoolmaster in the same play could not possibly be written by a man who had travelled no further in Latin than *hic, hæc, hoc*.

In *Henry the Sixth* we meet with a quotation from Virgil:

"Tantane animis cœlestibus iræ?"

But this, it seems, proves nothing, any more than the lines from Terence and Ovid, in the *Taming*

of the *Shrew*; for Mr. Farmer looks on Shakspeare's property in the comedy to be extremely disputable; and he has no doubt but *Henry the Sixth* had the same author with *Edward the Third*, which had been recovered to the world in Mr. Capell's Proofs.

If any play in the collection bears internal evidence of Shakspeare's hand, we may fairly give him *Timon of Athens*. In this play we have a familiar quotation from Horace:

"Ira furor brevis est."

I will not maintain but this hemistich may be found in Lilly or Udall; or that it is not in the *Palace of Pleasure*, or the *English Plutarch*; or that it was not originally foisted in by the players: it stands, however, in the play of *Timon of Athens*.

The world in general, and those who purpose to comment on Shakspeare in particular, will owe much to Mr. Farmer, whose researches into our old authors throw a lustre on many passages, the obscurity of which must else have been impenetrable. No future Upton or Gildon will go further than North's translation for Shakspeare's acquaintance with Plutarch, or balance between Dares Phrygius, and *The Troye Booke of Lydgate*. *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, in black letter, will for ever supersede *Saxo Grammaticus*; translated novels and ballads will, perhaps, be allowed the sources of *Romeo*, *Lear*, and *The Merchant of Venice*; and Shakspeare himself, however unlike Bayes in other particulars, will stand convicted of having transversed the prose of Holinshed; and, at the same time, to prove "that his studies lay in his own language,"

the translations of Ovid are determined to be the production of Heywood.

“That his *studies* were most demonstratively confined to *nature*, and his *own language*,” I readily allow; but does it hence follow that he was so deplorably ignorant of every other tongue, living or dead, that he only “remembered, perhaps, enough of his *school-boy* learning to put the *hig, hag, hog*, into the mouth of Sir H. Evans; and might pick up in the writers of the time, or the course of his conversation, a familiar phrase or two of French or Italian.” In Shakspeare’s plays both these last languages are plentifully scattered; but, then we are told, they might be impertinent additions of the players. Undoubtedly they might: but there they are, and, perhaps, few of the players had much more learning than Shakspeare.

Mr. Farmer himself will allow that Shakspeare began to learn Latin: I will allow that his *studies* lay in English: but why insist that he neither made any progress at school; nor improved his acquisitions there? The general encomiums of Suckling, Denham, Milton, &c. on his *native genius*,⁹ prove

⁹ Mr. Farmer closes the general testimonies of Shakspeare’s having been only indebted to nature, by saying, “He came out of her hand, as *some one else expresses it*, like Pallas out of Jove’s head, at full growth and mature.” It is whimsical enough, that this *some one else*, whose expression is here quoted to countenance the general notion of Shakspeare’s want of literature, should be no other than myself. Mr. Farmer does not choose to mention where he met with the expression of *some one else*; and *some one else* does not choose to mention where he dropt it. *

* It will appear still more whimsical that this *some one else* whose expression is here quoted, may have his claim to it superseded by

nothing; and Ben Jonson's celebrated charge of Shakspeare's *small Latin, and less Greek*,² seems absolutely to decide that he had *some* knowledge of both; and if we may judge by our own time, a man, who has any Greek, is seldom without a very competent share of Latin; and yet such a man is very likely to study Plutarch in English, and to read translations of Ovid.

See Dr. Farmer's reply to these remarks by Mr. Colman, in a note on LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST, Vol. VII. p. 253.

² In defence of the various reading of this passage, given in the Preface to the last edition of Shakspeare, "*small Latin and no Greek*," Mr. Farmer tells us, that "it was adopted above a century ago by W. Towers, in a panegyrick on Cartwright." Surely, Towers having said that Cartwright had *no* Greek, is no proof that Ben Jonson said so of Shakspeare."

that of the late Dr. Young, who in his *Conjectures on Original Composition*, (p. 100. Vol. V. edit. 1773.) has the following sentence; "An adult genius comes out of nature's hands, as Pallas out of Jove's head, at full growth and mature. Shakspeare's genius was of this kind." Where *some one else* the *first* may have intermediately dropped the contested expression I cannot ascertain; but *some one else* the *second* transcribed it from the author already mentioned. ANON.

DR. FARMER'S REPLY

T O

MR. COLMAN'S REMARKS.

THE use of the word *thrafonical*, in the play of *Love's Labour's Lost* [Act. iv. sc. ii.], is no argument that the author had read Terence. It was introduced to our language long before Shakspeare's time. Stanyhurst writes in a translation of one of Sir Thomas More's epigrams:

"Lynckte was in wedlocke a lofty *thrafonical* hufsuffe."

It can scarcely be necessary to animadvert any further upon what Mr. Colman has advanced in the appendix to his *Terence*. If this gentleman, at his leisure from modern plays, will condescend to open a few old ones, he will soon be satisfied, that Shakspeare was obliged to learn and repeat in the course of his profession, such Latin *fragments*, as are met with in his works. The formidable one, *ira furor brevis est*, which is quoted from *Timon*, may be found, not in plays only, but in every

³ In support, of Dr. Farmer's opinion, the following passage from *Orlando Furioso* 1594. may be brought:

"— Knowing him to be a *Thrafonical* mad cap, they have sent me a *Gnathonical* companion," &c.

Greene, in the dedication to his *Arcadia*, has the same word:

"— as of some *thrafonical* huffe-suffe."

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critical essay, from that of King *James* to that of dean *Swift* inclusive. I will only add, that if Mr. Colman had previously looked at the panegyric on *Cartwright*, he would not so strangely have misrepresented my argument from it: but thus it must ever be with the most ingenious men, when they talk *without-book*. Let me however take this opportunity of acknowledging the very genteel language which he has been pleased to use on this occasion.

F I N I S.